Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR® ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1989 ISSUE #20
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COVER: A giant who's been dead for 500 years is not a pretty sight, even if you're facing only his ghost, like the three brave souls in Daniel Horne's cover painting for "Ancient Blood."

Milestone 100

While the last issue of DUNGEON® Adventures marked the anniversary of its beginning and the start of our fourth year, we let that pass unnoticed in this column. With this issue, however, we reach another sort of milestone. We have now published exactly 100 modules in DUNGEON Adventures. Even at full cover price, that's only 75¢ per adventure (those of you who have subscriptions get an even better deal).

Have we lived up to our offer to provide a "broad spectrum of material . . . dungeon crawls, wilderness camp-outs, *Oriental Adventures* modules, solo quests . . . and more" (as Roger Moore wrote in the editorial in issue #1)? Write and let us know. In the coming months we should have more D&D® adventures as you requested, but that doesn't mean you should stop sending them in. Remember, we can publish only what we receive from *you*. In a very real sense, DUNGEON Adventures is your magazine.

Did one of your players draw the Key card from the *deck of many things* in last issue's "House of Cards" adventure? This issue's "Pride of the Sky" begins with the delivery of a treasure map to one of the player characters. With a bit of rewriting, you can create an interesting bridge between the two adventures. Yes, one module is for the AD&D® game and the other for the D&D game, but a creative Dungeon Master should have no trouble making use of the stories and changing the statistics to fit.

This issue brings you a double dose of frost giants, just in time for the winter season ahead. Those giants that live on the mountain known as White Fang are very much at home, but the denizens of "Ancient Blood" are nowhere near as healthy. If you feel a chill running down your spine, it may not be the weather.

With this issue, we say goodbye to our art director, Lori Svikel, and welcome Paul Hanchette to that position. We wish them both the best of luck.

Barbara G. Young

Vol. IV, No. 2

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(AD&D solo for 10th-level thief) If a company of warriors cannot steal the Gem of the Giants, perhaps one thief can. Or so you'd like to think. 26

Randy Maxwell — **PRIDE OF THE SKY**
(D&D levels 8-12) All that your departed aunt left you was a chance to get famous and rich, if the attempt doesn't kill you first. . . . 42

Grant and David Boucher — **ANCIENT BLOOD**
(AD&D levels 3-5) Five centuries is not long enough for a giant king to forgive a defeat—or forget a curse. 53

Though you should build a bark of dead men's bones,
And rear a phantom gibbet for a mast,
Stitch creeds together for a sail, with groans
To fill it out, bloodstained and aghast;
Although your rudder be a Dragon's tail,
Long sever'd, yet still hard with agony,
Your cordage large uprootings from the skull
Of bald Medusa; certes you would fail
To find the Melancholy, whether she
Dreameth in any isle of Lethe dull.

"Ode on Melancholy," John Keats

LETTERS

Needs Higher Levels

First of all, I'd like to thank you very much for *the* best AD&D® accessory made: DUNGEON® Magazine. Your magazine saves me a lot of money and also has a great variety of stories that my players enjoy. We especially enjoyed Grant Boucher's "Out of the Ashes" [issue #17]. It was one of the few modules that actually gave them a challenge—a big one.

Second, would it be possible to include a few more high-level adventures?

Steven Johnson
Big Falls, Minnesota

We'd like to run more high-level adventures, if some good ones are submitted.

To Box . . .

In response to your "To Box, Or Not to Box" letter in issue #19, I feel you should at least box basic descriptions and dimensions of rooms so DMs don't have to search for them. More in-depth descriptions should be left to individual writers.

Toby Ault
No Address Given

I have been a Dungeon Master for about a year now and find your magazine to be a big help. I have a few suggestions that you might consider for your magazine:

1. How about requiring boxed text in all of your modules from now on, as Shado Hart suggested in issue #19?

2. Along with the names and locations of the people who write letters to you, include their ages and whether they are DMs or players. I'm only 16, and it's nice to know there are other DMs my age.

3. Finally, how about a DM/player pen-pal page for people who wish to share their ideas with others? If you think this is a good idea, my name and address are open to anyone.

Thank you, and let me comment on the awesome cover art for issue #19. Good work, Bob, and I hope to see your artwork more often.

Rusty Merritt
Route 1, Box 408
Pocomoke, Maryland 21851

While we can't devote a whole page to pen-pal listings, we'll be happy to list a letter writer's full address if this is specifically requested.

Some people mention their ages in letters and others don't. We don't feel age is particularly relevant to the enjoyment of role-playing games.

I recently bought issue #19 of your publication because I was intrigued by the mention of "House of Cards" in DRAGON® Magazine #148. I have played and DMed the AD&D game for over five years now and have been a regular reader of DRAGON Magazine for about three years.

I have seen the subscription cards for your magazine in DRAGON Magazine, but I never actually knew what your magazine was. I am so thrilled with this issue that I will be subscribing to DUNGEON Adventures very soon. I have always felt that AD&D modules were substantially overpriced, and the mini-modules sometimes found in DRAGON Magazine are printed so rarely, that I have been forced to write some weaker adventures of my own. I'm glad I found you guys!

I have one comment about the letter from Shado Hart in issue #19. Being a DM for a long time, I have had plenty of experience with many different writers and modules. My players often grumble (as do I) when they hear me spitting out choppy descriptions of rooms in a last-second ad lib. They have developed a guessing game among themselves as to whether I am reading a boxed description or one of my own. It would make it a lot easier on many DMs if the descriptions for *every* room were boxed, not just the important ones. Also, boxing text saves the already overworked DM quite a bit of time spent highlighting things and such. I feel that boxing text should be a mandatory part of every module.

Nic Warmenhoven
Seattle, Washington

I am writing in response to the question asked in issue #19: Should every adventure have boxed descriptions to be read to the players? I think it would depend on the adventure. In a very long adventure, it would be useful, as then the DM has a lot less work. If the DM doesn't like something about the descriptions, he/she can always change them.

I think the boxes should be varied. For example, in the AD&D module N5 *Under Illefarn,* there are boxes scattered about to be read to the players, but the module still leaves lots of room for the DM to expand and add material. So I think boxes should be used but not to the extent that the DM has nothing left to do but play the NPCs. I would also like to see more one-player games.

Bill McAdie
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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. . . Or Not to Box

In response to Shado Hart's letter in issue #19: No! Not all adventures should be boxed. As you say, many DMs resent being told what to say. Also, I would like to see fewer D&D® adventures (as opposed to AD&D adventures). It seems to me that someone into the game enough to subscribe to your magazine would have progressed to the advanced level.

Steve Smith
Chula Vista, California

It is worth pointing out that the AD&D game is not really more advanced than the D&D game at this date. Both games have become quite advanced in design, and each offers options that the other does not (you can play a deity-level character in the D&D game using the Immortals Set, for example). Converting a module from one system to the other is usually not difficult, as both games came from a common ancestor.

First of all, thanks for the great magazine that you folks put out. I appreciate the variety of adventures you manage to publish, and I am always pleased by your superb artwork.

In issue #19, Shado Hart brought up the question "To Box, Or Not to Box." Personally, I prefer a variety. Sometimes boxed text is helpful, but other times it is annoying. I think that you should continue to use a variety because you can never please everyone simultaneously, but you can please different people at different times.

Also, I don't think you should omit solo, GREYHAWK®, or Oriental adventures just because some readers don't like them. Others, myself included, prefer such adventures. Those who don't like or want them don't have to read them.

Alan Block
Beloit, Wisconsin

Your question concerning adventures with boxed descriptions versus adventures of other sorts raises some interesting points for both versions of module creation. It is true that boxed descriptions present a readily accessible and playable campaign. It is also true that excessive use of detailed, "rehearsed" speeches of these sorts can lead to player boredom. As is true in most aspects of life, something used in moderation is fine. But go overboard and you soon find yourself in trouble.

Many campaigns can survive through disagreement, separation by miles, or occasional unfair treatment. However, few and far between are those that remain unscathed through Dullsville. By altering your guidelines to insist on boxed descriptions, you are limiting the abilities of your contributing writers. You are basically telling them that they must present their versions of fantasy in a way that takes away from their creativity.

This is not to say that the modules presented with boxed descriptions are boring. A fair and equal sprinkling of all different types of adventure styles will continue to allow players to choose the method that best suits their needs. DUNGEON Magazine has realized this and continues to present the most diversified adventures produced today. I don't believe that a change is in order.

Barry A. Dillinger
Garfield, New Jersey

Word From Overseas

I really enjoy your magazine. It is well set out and sports enough good art to complement the broad range of adventures, and offers enough scope for anyone interested in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® games.

Because my sister and I don't live in the United States, Canada, or the U.K., it is difficult for us to get hold of good adventures. When we saw an American reading DUNGEON® Magazine on an airplane, we asked for a subscription card, and here we are.

We'd like to see more lengthy high-level adventures such as "Threshold of Evil" (issue #10) by Scott Bennie, which was excellent. My sister also enjoyed DMing "Flowers of Flame" (issue #8).

Please! Save us poor Dutchmen from another "Huddle Farm"! It seems issue #12 suffered from something horrendous, for yet another adventure caused us to rain criticisms upon it, namely "Intrigue in the Depths."

But "Palace in the Sky" (issue #16) had my players haunt the local bugbears with weird magicks in the air as they announced themselves as "Spiritbane."

We'd like to see the information to be read to the players outlined all the time. Often, this information is scattered throughout the room description.

We understand the arguments that DMs give for solo adventures, but frankly, we don't want them. Maybe one in six issues would be better than one in three, and the space can be used for more looooong adventures.

We'd also like to inquire about the rate you pay the artists that supply the cover and inside art, and how you become eligible for doing art. Where can we write for more information and guidelines?

Niels and Floor Remmelzwaal
Katwijk aan Zee, Holland

For artist guidelines, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Art Director, DUNGEON Adventures, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A.

Removing Excess Magic

In response to Rich Minma's letter in DUNGEON issue #19, I would like to share my own experiences with the problems he mentions.

In the campaign I run, magical items tend to accumulate rapidly in spite of careful (my players would say "incredibly stingy") placement of treasure. This is because "PCs hoard valuable items," as stated in the response to Mr. Minma's letter. Furthermore, when a character dies, his equipment is usually parceled out among the other party members, further increasing the number of items available to a single PC. Thus, if magical items are not taken out of play somehow, each character will eventually have a formidable arsenal of magic with which to defeat all but the most powerful monsters.

The suggestions offered for getting rid of magical items will work, but some require the DM to play an active role in their elimination. This may anger players and cause needless antagonism. Luckily, there are several rules that check the accumulation of magic without the DM's direct intervention.

First, many items come with charges. Eventually they will be used up and removed from the campaign. Second, and more important, is the often-overlooked effect of area attacks on equipment. If a character fails a saving throw vs. a *fireball,* dragon breath, or similar attack, all the exposed equipment he carries must save against the

attack form or be destroyed. Although magic items have a bonus to this save, not all will survive. Eventually, this creates a balance between "incoming" and "outgoing" magical items. If the players are aware of the rule, they will have little cause for complaint when they attack a sleeping dragon and end up losing magical items to its breath, for they themselves chose to take that risk. (Sometimes a PC will even "voluntarily" help remove items by casting a *fireball* spell in an enclosed space).

Nicholas R. Howe
Hamden, Connecticut

Why Are Stores First?

I am a currently-short-of-players DM and a subscriber. Why do the stores receive DUNGEON Magazine before I do? It would be most beneficial if subscribers were to get the issues before the stores, so DMs can run the adventures before the players have a chance to read them (unless they're subscribers themselves).

I am a good writer but a lousy typist. How badly would this affect the acceptance of my module proposals? Is there no chance of handwritten modules being accepted? And how long should the average proposal be?

If you should decide to print this letter, please print my full address so that other players can contact me. Thanks!

Keoki Young
4039 East E Street
Tacoma, Washington 98404

We agree that subscribers should get their issues before DUNGEON Magazine arrives in the stores, and not only because players might otherwise see the adventures first (that's another problem, and out of our control). For the past several issues, the shippers that deliver the magazine to stores have been more efficient than the post office, which delivers subscriber copies via second-class mail. Thus, subscribers saw the new issue for sale before their mail copies arrived. We're looking into this problem and hope to correct it soon.

A typed proposal should be two to four double-spaced pages, or as long as it needs to be without rambling on. If I had to judge a proposal on looks alone (which I don't do), I'd rate a neatly printed submission over one that is messily typed. However, it would be very difficult for me to read an entire handwritten module, and it would take you forever to hand print one neatly. Then again, I don't want to read 50 pages of awful typing, either. Let's say that if your proposal is really interesting, we can negotiate on the form of the finished module. Perhaps you can help out a friend in return for typing services.

My best advice in the life-skills department is to learn to type. There will be few office or professional jobs in the future that do not require "keyboarding," on either a computer, word processor, or plain old typewriter.

Adventures To Order

I have subscribed to DUNGEON Magazine from its beginning, and I'd like to congratulate the staff on a job well done. I have every issue except for the seventh, which I missed because I did not resubscribe quickly enough. I was wondering if you could publish a list of your available back issues.

Also, I would like to join with Christian Lee Gorde ("Letters," issue #19) in praising Paul Hancock's "Chadranther's Bane" (issue #18). It is the most enjoyable module that I have seen in DUNGEON Magazine.

Oliver Homann
Tallahassee, Florida

If you want to know which back issues of DUNGEON Adventures or DRAGON Magazine are available, write to: The Mail Order Hobby Shop, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147, and ask for a free catalog (as well as a list of available issues). You can also call (414) 248-3625 with your inquiries. Once you know what you want to order, you can use the toll-free number given in the catalog. At the moment, DUNGEON issue #7 is in stock.

What We Do Best

I'd like to compliment you and your staff for maintaining an excellent level of quality in DUNGEON Magazine. I have followed it since its first issue and now, into its fourth year, it has not declined in quality of adventures or physical standards. And, best of all, the price hasn't changed!

Furthermore, I find the following features outstanding: consistently good cover art; the cover bearing the date, issue number, and volume numbers (this feature helps in organizing my library of magazines without having to flip to the title page); the short biographies of the authors; the contents page quote; the comment about the cover; a consistency of mapping symbols; a good balance of long/short and high/low adventures; and no advertising within the pages of the magazine itself.

Some of these features may seem merely obvious, but they are not. The fact that all these features are found in one magazine makes it an excellent product and one that I am happy to support, even if I don't use all the material in a given issue.

The only suggestion for improvement I can make comes from my preference, as a Dungeon Master, to have maps separate from text. I resolve this by photocopying pages with maps and keeping them handy for reference during play. I realize that putting one map to a page, or even clustering several maps on one page, might involve higher production costs, but I wanted to include at least one "complaint" along with the deserved praise.

The effort you and your staff put into each issue is manifest by your product. Keep up the good work!

J. Stephen Bonario
Houston, Texas

The Fascinating Orient

I love issue #19. Never have I seen a better picture of Death. It is, as my friends say, "Sssmokin'!"

I have been playing AD&D games for nine years, and I've played *Oriental Adventures* ever since it was introduced. But I'm relatively new to DUNGEON Magazine.

I was shocked when I read that only 23% of DUNGEON Adventures readers wanted or preferred Oriental adventures in this magazine. The Orient is one of the most interesting places to adventure in the AD&D game.

Where else does a character have to be polite to keep his head? Where else can a warrior use his internal energy to raise his level by two? Imagine the surprise on the mighty cavalier's face as he's thrown from his charging mount and slammed onto the ground with crushing force by a weaponless little old lady!

I have been to every Oriental country that Americans are allowed into, and they have fascinating histories and legends that would make wonderful

adventures. I'd like to see more Oriental adventures, lots more. I even plan to submit some myself.

Would it be possible to reprint some of the adventures that appeared in back issues of DRAGON Magazine in this magazine? I would like to run them, but they are not available to me.

Now, about those of you who think there should be "fewer D&D" or "fewer AD&D" and/or no solo, Oriental/Kara Tur, FORGOTTEN REALMS®, GREYHAWK, Krynn, Nehwon, or Known World adventures. Remember, DUNGEON Magazine is for *everyone,* not must one type of gaming style, and should not be restricted to one type. Please try not to be so selfish and let everyone play the way they like to play.

Dalith "Nightfarer" Crawford
Everett, Washington

Good Old Goblins

Bravo! I would like to congratulate Steve Gilbert and Bill Slavicek for their module "Tallow's Deep" (issue #18). The adventure was an excellent fit into my campaign.

The first thing to catch my interest was the goblin proverb under the index title. From there, my interest only grew. I played the adventure with my current players, who are all at least 9th level. Even at this stage of the game, it was a challenge for them. Just as written in the introduction, they thought they were in for a night of "wholesale slaughter." They threw caution to the winds and, although no one perished, they darn near threw their lives away, too.

I had immense fun with this adventure and would have to say that "Tallow's Deep" was probably one of the best modules I have seen in any issue of DUNGEON Magazine. Good work, guys. Keep 'em coming.

Kelly Berger
Seattle, Washington

Thieves & Paladins

I would like to comment on a few modules that I have challenged my players to enter. I DM a group of 4-5 players who usually take 5-7 characters through their adventures.

In issue #10, I took the PCs through "The Shrine of Ilsidahur." They found this to be a challenging adventure. Their greedy thief was especially surprised by the protein polymorph.

In issue #13, "The Moor-Tomb Map" was more fun for the thief. He took a dive when the ghast took him away. As if the ghast wasn't enough, the bandits gave them a run for their money. I also plan to take them through "The Treasure Vault of Kasil" [issue #13]. Looks like more trouble for the thief.

I have a question that needs an answer; well, two questions, actually. I do not completely understand the effects of a paladin's *protection from evil, 1" radius.* Does this protection apply to all evil (what about undead)? I cannot seem to find these answers in the *Players Handbook, Unearthed Arcana,* or the *Dungeon Masters Guide.*

John Szul
No Address Given

For more information on the paladin's protection from evil *powers, see the AD&D 2nd Edition* Player's Handbook, *pages 27-28.*

Thieves and Others

I and all my friends enjoy my copy of DUNGEON Adventures. Ten of us play AD&D games, and about half of us want to play thieves. That's one of the reasons I buy DUNGEON Adventures, for the thieves-only adventures.

Another type of adventure I would love to see is a head-to-head AD&D module. I changed "In Defense of the Law" [issue #8] into a head-to-head battle. It looks perfect, although we haven't played it yet.

We all love your magazine. So far we have only used your AD&D modules, but I'm saving up the Oriental adventures until there are enough to start up a campaign. The D&D® game modules aren't used because everyone recognizes the difference between D&D and AD&D games and complains if I take them through one. I must admit that "Of Nests and Nations" [issue #13] looks very good. I might get it past them with a few changes.

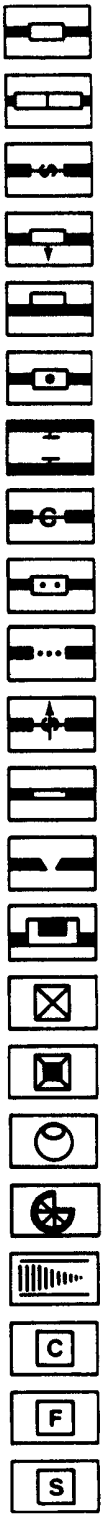
I love the quotes at the bottom of the table of contents. More letters! I love to read them, as I'm sure you do, too.

Emmett Mantle
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Keep those letters coming. We want more . . . MORE!

MAP SYMBOLS

These symbols are used on most maps in DUNGEON® Adventures.



THE SHIP OF NIGHT

BY WOLFGANG BAUR

What kind of ship would dwarves build—miles below ground?

Artwork by Dave Sutherland

Wolfgang Baur is currently working on a supplement to I.C.E.'s MIDDLE-EARTH ROLE-PLAYING™ game and hopes to become a hacker in his spare time. He claims that "The Ship of Night" was inspired by a poem by Keats (see table of contents page). This is his second appearance in DUNGEON® Adventures.

"The Ship of Night" is an AD&D® adventure for 5-7 characters of levels 7-9 (about 48 total levels) played by experienced and cooperative players. Dwarves and gnomes will be especially useful since much of the adventure takes place deep underground, and dwarven characters have special motivations for exploring this region. Because the Underdark is an unforgiving environment, inexperienced or poorly organized players should use PCs about two levels higher to complete this adventure.

This scenario takes place in the mountains of the North in the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ setting and mentions places, people, and history from that world. Because of the isolated nature of any Underdark realm, the adventure can easily be adapted to campaigns set elsewhere. The *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* will prove helpful in resolving problems of food, water, and general survival. Game supplements FR1 *Waterdeep and the North* and FR5 *The Savage Frontier* could prove useful in providing general background information.

For the Dungeon Master

The Underdark area to be explored in this adventure is Hammerkeep, an ancient dwarven mine and city established by the Arzhoun clan in the glory days of the dwarven race, when the kingdom of Delzoun prospered and sent merchants and colonists throughout the North. As the dwarven race declined, these cities and fortresses were gradually overrun or abandoned. Hammerkeep is now ruled by derro.

The house of Arzhoun was one of many that was wiped out, and Hammerkeep was forgotten until recent investigations of old maps told Birgit, a dwarven sage, its location and history. Although the derro now rule Hammerkeep, its location remains a mystery to surface dwellers because of the paranoia and suspicion the derro have toward sunlit lands.

The few humans who dwell in this portion of the far North refer to the

derro as "meredwarves" or "false dwarves" and fear them because of their midnight slave-taking raids against isolated settlements. In recent months, these raids have become increasingly frequent due to the activities of a new secret cult among the derro. There have also been reports of glowing dwarven ghosts that appear out of nowhere and walk through walls. These reports result from the cultists' use of *phase potions,* which are described at the end of this module.

The Cult of the White Bat is a derro secret society composed of an elite group of savants, officers, and trusted craftsmen. All members are supposedly equal in status, but in practice, the group is led by Whiskers, the most powerful of the savants. The cult seeks to extend derro power, wealth, and influence throughout the Underdark, primarily by the capture of slaves from the surface. At the moment, the cult's activities are limited (there are at most 20 cult members) and are kept hidden from the derro king. If the cult ever takes the reins of power, the raids on the surface will turn into a full-scale war.

Adventure Background

The PCs may begin in Waterdeep, Neverwinter, Silverymoon, or any similar northern metropolis. The following information should be paraphrased for the players.

> You are resting in the city after your last adventure when a young dwarven messenger brings you an invitation to dine with Birgit of the Iron House, a much respected dwarven sage. You are asked to join her that evening at the Sign of the Melancholy Dwarf, an expensive inn in the wealthy quarter of the city.
>
> Upon arrival at the Melancholy Dwarf, you are drawn to the back by a charming young dwarf who introduces herself as Tamara. She tells you that her aunt, the sage Birgit, is waiting for you in a private booth in the back. She leads you there and draws aside the curtains, revealing a lavishly decked table and an old dwarven matron. "Eat first, talk later," Birgit says after you introduce yourselves.
>
> When the goose, potatoes, yams, wines, and various sweetmeats have all met their ends, Birgit clears her throat and speaks in a remarkably deep voice. "I wish you to bring me the plans of an engineering marvel constructed long ago in Hammerkeep, an old and largely forgotten dwarfhold. I want as many details as possible. I'm too old and busy to go myself. The maps I've discovered show the location of Hammerkeep to be in the northern Neverwinter

Derro statistics

Unless otherwise noted, various derro encountered in the Underdark have the following basic statistics:

Derro archer: AC 7; MV 9; HD 3; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3 per bolt; SA poisoned bolts (save vs. poison or take 2d6 hp extra damage); SD 30% magic resistance; ML 14; AL CE; MM2/42; studded leather armor, light repeating crossbow (120′ range, two shots per round, six-bolt capacity). Note that a dexterity of 16 or better will improve the missile-fire THAC0.

Derro hook warrior: AC 7; MV 9; HD 3; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 with either weapon; SA hook fauchard has 25% chance to topple man-size or smaller opponent; SD 30% magic resistance; ML 14; AL CE; MM2/42; studded leather armor, hook fauchard, dagger. *Unearthed Arcana* describes the hook fauchard (pages 26-27 and 77); study this information and that on page 42 of *Monster Manual II* before running melees involving this weapon.

Derro aklys warrior: AC 5; MV 9; HD 3; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA aklys has a 12% chance of entangling or toppling a man-size or smaller victim within a 10′ range; SD 30% magic resistance; ML 14; AL CE; MM2/42; scale mail armor, spiked buckler, dagger, aklys with 10′ rope. *Unearthed Arcana* describes the aklys (pages 26-28 and 77) and spiked buckler (pages 26-27 and 78); study this information and that on page 42 of *Monster Manual II* before running melees involving these weapons. Note that a dexterity of 16 or better will improve the hurled-aklys THAC0.

Derro spear warrior: AC 5; MV 9; HD 3; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SD 30% magic resistance; ML 14; AL CE; MM2/42; scale mail armor, normal buckler, spear, leather pick (damage as a military horseman's pick). Note that a dexterity of 16 or better will improve the hurled-spear THAC0.

Derro corporal: As per any other group above, but with: AC 5; HD 4; ML 15; scale mail armor, best weapons. Corporals' statistics are usually listed with large groups of the above types.

Derro sergeant: As per any other group above, but with: AC 5; HD 5; THAC0 15; ML 15; scale mail armor, best weapons. Sergeant statistics are usually listed with large groups of the above types.

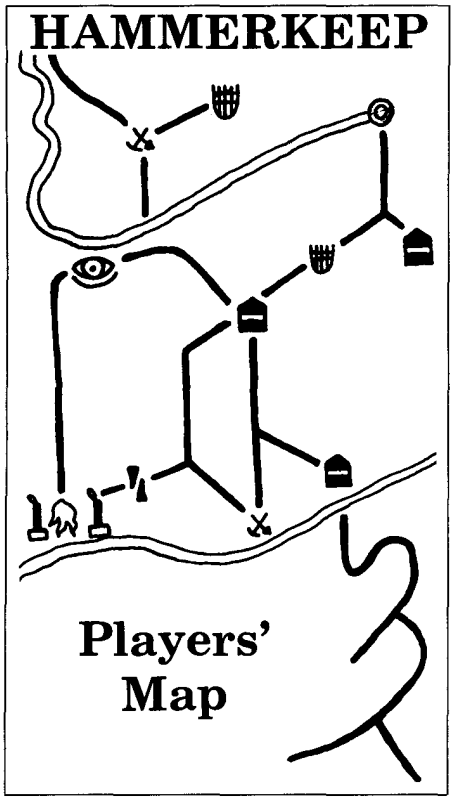
Derro lieutenant: As per any other group above, but with: AC 5; HD 6; THAC0 15; ML 16; scale mail armor, best weapons.

Derro leader: As per any other group above, but with: AC 5; HD 7; THAC0 13; ML 16; scale mail armor, best weapons.

Derro student savant: As per derro corporal, sergeant, lieutenant, or leader, according to hit dice; HD 4-7; SA 25% can use any magical item or weapon (75% use only wizards' magical items and weapons), can cast 1-3 wizards' spells per day (from list in MM2/42) at 12th level; can automatically *comprehend languages* and *read magic*; may possess one useful magical item; sage ability (one field).

Derro savant: As per derro sergeant, lieutenant, or leader, according to hit dice; HD 5-8; SA can use any magical item or weapon, can cast 6-9 wizards' spells per day (from the list in MM2/42) at 12th level; can automatically *comprehend languages* and *read magic;* may possess 2-3 useful magical items; sage ability (one field, in depth).

All derro are about 4′ tall and weigh about 75 lbs. Dexterity is given for each derro described in this adventure; the DM must adjust armor class and missile-fire THAC0 scores with this information. Also given are each derro's hit points and any other additional information. Derro have 30′ infravision (useable anywhere) and 120′ ultravision (useable only aboveground at night).



Woods near Mount Hotenow. These maps show some of the underground layout, but much of that is surely out of date.

"In any case, a construction called the 'Ship of Night' is marked in large letters in the core halls. I've looked up the reference; rumors and hearsay mention a huge work, one that can't be removed from Hammerkeep and that was built for its makers' own pride and amusement. The remarkable thing is that there is no mention of what this 'ship' is. Apparently no one outside the clan has ever seen it. Hammerkeep was home to the dwarven House of Arzhoun, whose records show that digging and other architectural work kept a hundred dwarves occupied for fifteen years and cost a small fortune, but half the costs are listed under 'miscellaneous.'

"Despite the huge size and cost that the records indicate, the figures are probably accurate. The House of Arzhoun was small but very rich. It was also a very significant tribe whose clans were known more for engineering marvels, tool-making skills, and stonework miracles than great warriors or gemcutters, so building a huge underground ship or a colossal statue or some other marvel wasn't beyond them. Hammerkeep and its connecting passages were dug entirely from native rock rather than expanded from existing passages and fault lines. 'Doing it Arzhoun's way' is a saying still current among dwarves—it means going about something the hard way. The Arzhouns have long since abandoned their halls, but their work should be preserved."

Birgit motions to Tamara, who reaches down and picks up some maps. When spread open on the table, the freshly inked vellum shows that Hammerkeep extends for miles under the ground, but some of the tunnels shown, says Birgit, may well have collapsed or been under construction at the time the maps were made.

"You can keep the maps to guide you. They're copies of copies, so I'm not guaranteeing their accuracy. Bring back better ones for me. If you don't come back, I can use my copies to send a rescue party after you." Birgit clears her throat. "Not that I think you won't make it, but I need to find out what the Arzhouns built and what happened to their halls. I'd like to see their project reclaimed or reconstructed. Dwarven pride demands it. If she likes, Tamara may accompany you to make the actual drawings. Your job will be getting in and out safely, reporting what you see, and possibly wiping out the creatures that infest the caverns. I can pay in gold or information, as you prefer."

Unless the PCs ask for more details, Birgit does not mention the reports of glowing dwarven ghosts (she does not want to frighten the adventurers off). If pressed, she admits to having heard the rumors, but she knows no more than any barroom gossip. She may suggest that these are the ghosts of the ancient Arzhouns, roused from slumber by some calamity, but this is just her theory, and there is no evidence to back it up. If the PCs check up on local gossip before leaving town, they hear at least one version of the "dwarven ghosts" story.

Birgit's map (see the illustration) is hopelessly out of date. Many of the passages shown have collapsed over the years. The symbols on the map should be left for the players to puzzle over. Mining areas are marked with crossed picks and shovels; guarded points are noted by stylized shields; entrances to the underworld are marked by portcullises; and Hammerkeep's core is shown as a flame flanked by hammers. Rivers are drawn in as squiggles; tunnels are straight lines. The DM must determine whether any of the collapsed passages can be dug up and, if so, where they lead. The spiral icon could be the site of a giant whirlpool in an underground lake, and the eye symbol might mark the location of an abandoned kuo-toan shrine guarded by a spectator.

Beyond preserving a part of her dwarven heritage, Birgit hopes to revitalize her clan by the reconquest or reconstruction of the Arzhoun's underground miracle. What the "Ship of Night" *is* isn't as important as the fact that it exists and proves the former (and future, Birgit hopes) greatness of the dwarven race.

Birgit: AC 8; MV 6; sage/C8; hp 29; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 10, D 12, C 15, I 17, W 15, Ch 14; ML 12; AL LG; *wand of earth and stone, ring of blinking, cloak of displacement,* walking stick. Birgit can cast *command* (×2), *detect evil, detect magic, light, find traps, hold person, know alignment, withdraw, dispel magic, glyph of warding, meld into stone, detect lie,* and *tongues,* She will not cast any spells in the PCs' presence without a very good reason. Birgit's field of study is dwarven engineering.

Tamara, Birgit's young niece and apprentice, will decline to accompany the PCs if they have henchmen or hirelings. If Tamara does go along, she acts as Birgit's notary, testifying to the truth of what the PCs report. The apprentice is a party liability, prone to getting into trouble because she is drawn to investigate everything out of both natural curiosity and her training as a sage. Also note the possibility that she may be captured once area A4 is reached.

Tamara: AC 8; MV 6; apprentice sage/C2; hp 15; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 14, D 9, C 15, I 16, W 16, Ch 11; ML 9; AL LN; *ring of protection +2,* staff. Tamara's field of study is cartography. Although she will only use them in extreme distress, Ta-

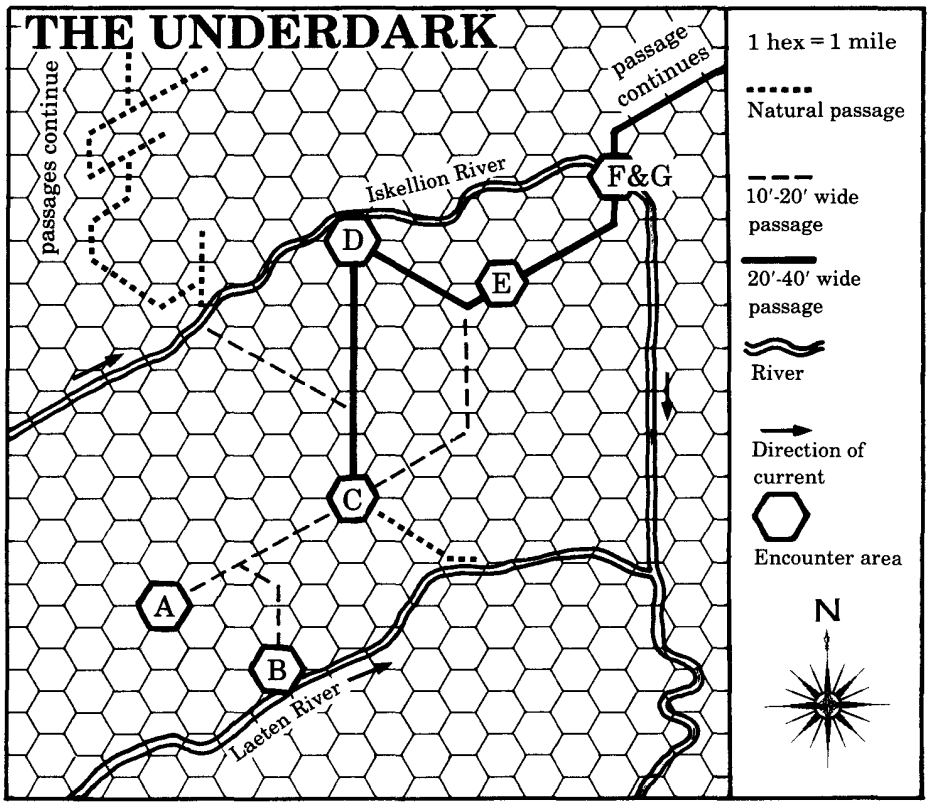
mara can cast the spells *detect magic, entangle, faerie fire,* and *sanctuary.*

No random encounters are provided for the journey to the site of the ancient halls, because the PCs will have enough trouble once they reach the Underdark. If some encounters are needed to spice up the journey to the forest, the DM should consider that griffons are native to the nearby mountains, and orcs frequently raid throughout the area. Mount Hotenow and the Neverwinter Woods could be replaced with a similar sleepy volcano and subarctic to temperate forest.

Mount Hotenow is mentioned briefly in FR5 *The Savage Frontier,* page 48 ("Neverwinter Woods"). Mount Hotenow is roughly 80 miles north of Neverwinter, 470 miles from Silverymoon via Longsaddle, and 450 miles from Waterdeep. Due to the uncharted and dangerous nature of the woods, the best approach is from the northeast, but this adds 270 miles to the approach from Neverwinter. Since getting to Mount Hotenow could take weeks, the DM should keep careful track of the PCs' provisions. If the adventurers plan ahead, they will bring mules to carry their food for the trek underground. If not, the expedition may be cut short or plagued by hunger. A generous DM might allow a poorly equipped party to encounter frequent sources of food and water, but if the players are inexperienced enough to forget sufficient food, their characters will probably survive only long enough to become food for something else.

Once the PCs are actually in the Underdark, encounters occur on a 1 on 1d8, rolled twice a day or at the DM's discretion to liven up a dull section of travel. Encounters can be selected by rolling 2d8 and consulting the Underdark Encounters table or can be chosen if the DM feels a particular creature is appropriate or interesting. No encounter should be used more than the number of times given at the end of each description; if that encounter number is rolled more often than that, no encounter is given. Each duplicate encounter is with a separate group. Unless noted, no encounter has treasure.

The tunnels of the Underdark come in three sizes: natural, minor, and major. Natural tunnels are simply passages along the earth's fault lines and old river beds. They are rough, narrow passages no more than 10′ wide and 6′ high (and often much less). Such passages often double back, dip, and climb, and some sections may be underwater or immersed in mud at certain times of the year. Minor tunnels are often natural passages that have been expanded and smoothed by the underground races. They are 10-20′ wide, up to 8′ high, and reasonably smooth, dry, and level. Major tunnels are the Underdark's highways; they are always the work of underground races and are usually kept in good repair. Such tunnels are 20-40′ wide and up to 10′ high, with very good footing.



Encounter Key

A. Entrance to the Underworld.

At the foot of the northern slope of Mount Hotenow, in the Neverwinter Woods, lies the wreckage of the entrance to Hammerkeep. The gatehouse of centuries past is now just a jumbled heap of stone without so much as bones or scorch marks to show where its defenders fell. The tunnel beyond is open to the elements. It is about 8′ high and 20′ wide, well carved, and reasonably level.

The area near Hammerkeep is warmed by geothermal heat, making infravision useless in some areas. The degree of impairment varies: from areas A to C, infravision has half its normal range. Farther into the Underdark, infravision is useless to show all but the hottest creatures (fire elementals, for example). For this reason, keeping track of torches, lanterns, and glowing magical weapons is essential.

Movement through the Underdark is at a rate in miles per day equal to the PCs' movement rate. The party moves at the rate of its slowest member, probably six miles per day or slower.

Just beneath the surface is a region of crumbled stone, collapsed passages, and half-fallen halls. In these areas, the Arzhoun clan stored surface supplies and items for trade, housed travelers, and kept animals. It is now difficult to walk through the few remaining halls and corridors due to fallen stone and the

Underdark Encounters (Roll 2d8)

2-4: **Bats, common** (2-200): AC 8 or 4; MV 1, Fl 24 (B); HD ¼; hp 2 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; ML 4; AL N; MC. Bats will not attack the PCs unless cornered but will swarm around the party for minutes at a time as they pass by. Bats can be encountered as often as needed.

5: **Gargoyles** (2-4): AC 5; MV 9, Fl 15; HD 4+4; hp 23, 24, 19, 17; THAC0 15; #AT 4; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6/1-4; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; ML 10; AL CE; MM1/42. These are not the same gargoyles as in area E. They can be encountered three times.

6: **Subterranean lizards** (2-5): AC 5; MV 12; HD 6; hp 25, 23, 19, 18, 16; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-12; SA double damage on a to-hit roll of 20 (with continuous damage thereafter); ML 9; AL N; MC. Lizards ambush parties from the walls and ceiling (−2 to surprise, as per the 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide,* page 102). Lizards can be encountered three times.

7: **Carrion crawlers** (2-12): AC 3 (head)/7 (body); MV 12; HD 3+1; hp 14 each; THAC0 17; #AT 8 or 1; Dmg special or 1-2; SA paralysis, multiple attacks; ML special; AL N; MC. These scavengers are found everywhere. They attack wounded parties or those carrying slain comrades. Carrion crawlers can be encountered twice.

8: **Rothé** (2-16): AC 7; MV 9; HD 2; hp 10 each; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-8; ML 3; AL N; FF/76. These gentle, shaggy beasts do not attack unless provoked. One rothé provides enough food for a week's rations for one person. There is a 75% chance that any given herd is shepherded by a dark creeper (see encounter 14 following). Rothé can be encountered twice.

9: **Giant mushrooms** (3-12): These rich brown mushrooms with yellow undersides and stems are completely harmless, although they do look a bit like shriekers. Though they have been nibbled by insects, they are still edible. One mushroom will provide a person with two days of delicious rations. Two patches of mushrooms can be encountered.

10: **Bombardier beetles** (3-6): AC 4; MV 9; HD 2+2; hp 18, 15, 12, 11, 10, 9; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-12; SA acid cloud; ML 7; AL N; MM1/9. These beetles eat anything but retreat after using their acid clouds if two or more of them are killed. Beetles can be encountered four times.

11: **Shriekers** (3-12): AC 7; MV 1; HD 3; hp 14 each; THAC0 17; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SD noise; ML special; AL N; MM1/87. Roll for two more encounters in the next two turns. Shriekers can be encountered as often as needed.

12: **Derro aklys sergeant, corporals, and warriors** (11): HD 5 (×1), 4 (×2), 3 (×8); hp 30, 23, 22, 14 (×8); D 18 (for sergeant), 16 (all others). These derro are searching for ingredients for savant spells and will avoid combat until they can report home and gather reinforcements. If the derro are already aware of the PCs, having met them at the mining outpost (area D), the watchtower (area C), or the realm (area F2), they try to ambush the party. This group is encountered only once.

13: **Piercers** (2-12): AC 3; MV 1; HD 4; hp 15 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 4-24; SA surprise; ML 9; AL N; MC. Piercers can be encountered twice.

14: **Dark creepers** (11-20): AC 0 (8 in light); MV 9; HD 1+1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA darkness, thief abilities, "death flash" causing blindness; *detect magical item* (15′ range); ML 6; AL CN; FF/22. They are accompanied by a **dark stalker:** AC 0 (8); MV 9; HD 2+1; hp 17; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA *darkness,* thief abilities, "death explosion"; SD *wall of fog; detect magical item* (15′ range); ML 8; AL CN; FF/23. This scouting expedition only tries to steal from the PCs and destroy their lights while they are resting. The creepers and stalker attack under cover of 20 *darkness* spells and a *wall of fog* that gives the air a damp feeling. If even a single one of the dark troupe is slain, the resulting explosion of light sends the rest of them scattering. Their treasure is three *daggers +1,* a *ring of fire resistance,* and six 100-gp gems, all carried by different creepers. This group is encountered only once.

15: **Kobolds** (13): AC 7; MV 6; HD ½; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 5; AL LE; MC; spears, spiked clubs. These fellows are hopelessly lost. They are very frightened and may either rush the party or flee in panic (50% chance of either). The kobolds are met once, after which they are eaten by other denizens of the Underdark.

16: **Cloaker** (1-3): AC 3/1 (tail); MV 1, Fl 15 (D); HD 6; hp 28, 26, 24; THAC0 15; #AT 2 + special; Dmg 1-6/1-6 + special; SA moaning, envelopment; SD shadow manipulation; ML 10; AL CN; MM2/25. Most often encountered in the small natural tunnels and in the north, cloakers ambush only an already wounded party. The cloakers are encountered only once.

deliberate work of destructive monsters. The halls are uninhabited by any major monsters, but the Cult of the White Bat has set up an outpost for its raids here.

A1. Spotter. A **derro aklys warrior** from area A4 (hp 18; D 15) watches the entrance to the Underdark from the arrow slits of the old guardpost. By night, his ultravision can spot most intruders. The scout alerts the rest of the derro in the complex and joins them in the ambush in room A4. The guardroom is bare except for a small stool and some crude graffiti.

If the PCs approached this area with great stealth, the DM should modify the encounters in this area appropriately.

A2. Quarters. These are identical dusty rooms once used to house travelers. They might serve as hiding places.

A3. Storage.

> Soot streaks the walls of this large room, apparently the remnants of the small campfire in the center of the room. Foul bits of food and rotting wood and rope lie scattered about.

This is where the White Bat cultists rest before going out to terrorize the upper world. The ashes of their fire are still warm, since the derro just broke camp to set up an ambush in area A4. They will not return here for several weeks after meeting the PCs.

A4. Under the Balcony.

> A rickety balcony above runs around three sides of this large room, and a large tunnel slopes steeply downward at the far end of the hall. There are sturdy double doors at balcony level to your right and left, and rubble chokes the southeast corner.

The balcony is indeed unstable and has a 25% chance per round of collapsing if a weight of more than 200 lbs. is placed on it. The double doors are locked, and the tunnel at the north end leads down into the Underdark.

The ambush party includes four **derro aklys warriors** (hp 18 (×4); D 15 each) and two **derro aklys corporals** (hp 25 (×2); D 17 each). Each wears a carved bone or ivory amulet (worth 100 gp) in the shape of a white

bat. They each also have a vial of *phase potion* (see end of module), which they use before ambushing the party in the large hall. They use their aklyses to unbalance and topple an NPC (a henchman or Tamara), then all use their *phase* abilities to capture the NPC by shifting to the Ethereal plane. They then travel through the Ethereal plane to gain a large lead over the party and take their prize to the mines (see areas D2 and D6). For this adventure, no other Ethereal encounters need be met.

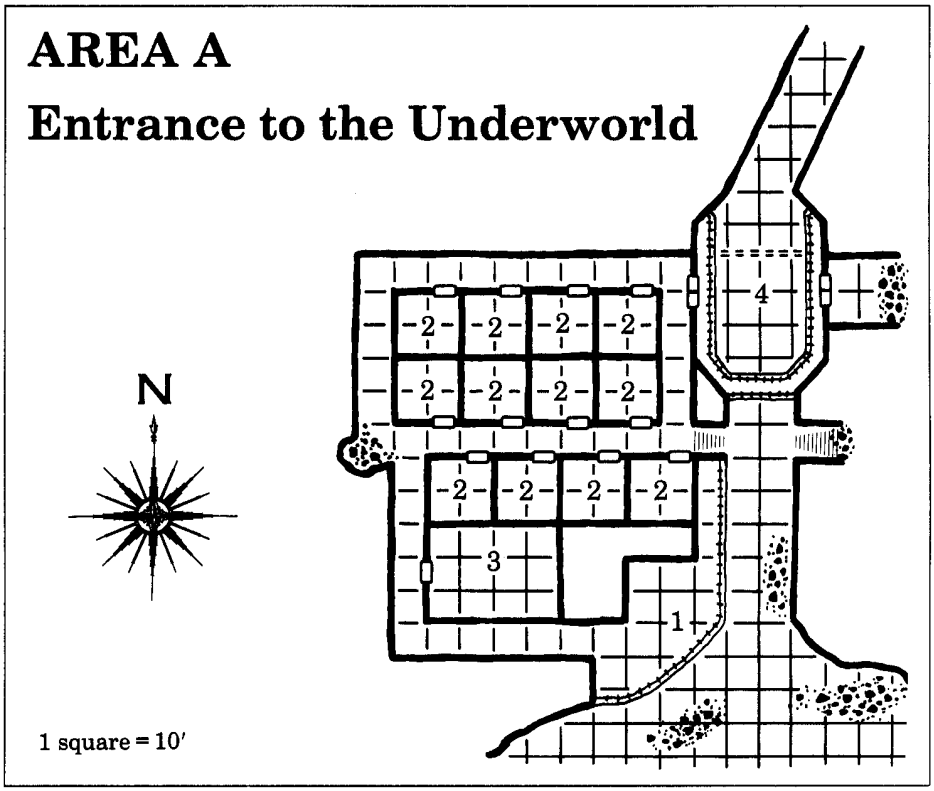
Ericho, a derro savant, remains on the western balcony while the warriors fight. He uses his *wall of force* spell to split the party down the middle along the dashed line on the map, separating the fighters in front from the mages, clerics, and others in the rear. He then uses *paralyzation* and *hypnotic pattern* spells to enable his warriors to capture the party easily.

Ericho (derro student savant): Statistics as per derro aklys corporal; hp 24; D 17; spells: *paralyzation, hypnotic pattern, wall of force.*

B. The Stone Gardens. This small cavern has been magically carved and adapted to suit the purposes of its owner, Madame Narcosa, a drow sorceress interested in dark necromantic magicks. Although she is evil, she welcomes visitors and merchants as pleasant diversions. Madame Narcosa expects polite, respectful behavior from her guests, and treats them well in return. Threatening words or gestures are responded to in kind, and woe to the party that attacks her on her home ground. She uses her secret corridors, spells, undead servants, and magical items to full effect, completely oblivious to the damage to her home that may result. This does not mean she will try frontal assaults when she is outnumbered. Instead, she uses spells like *invisibility* and *water walk* to avoid and then harry the party, striking and then retreating behind her servants or a wall of smoke (from the kitchen, area B10) or water (areas B2 and B11).

B1. Foyer.

The rough passage spreads out here into an oval cave with walls speckled with gold. A dark pool of water covers the left side of the cave, and heavy rugs with geometric patterns cover the hall leading out the far end. In the center of the cave are two beings in ancient livery of green and black. They bow courteously, but you see a cold light in their eyes. "I am Xavier. May I inquire who has come to call upon Madame?" one of them asks in a deep, servile voice.



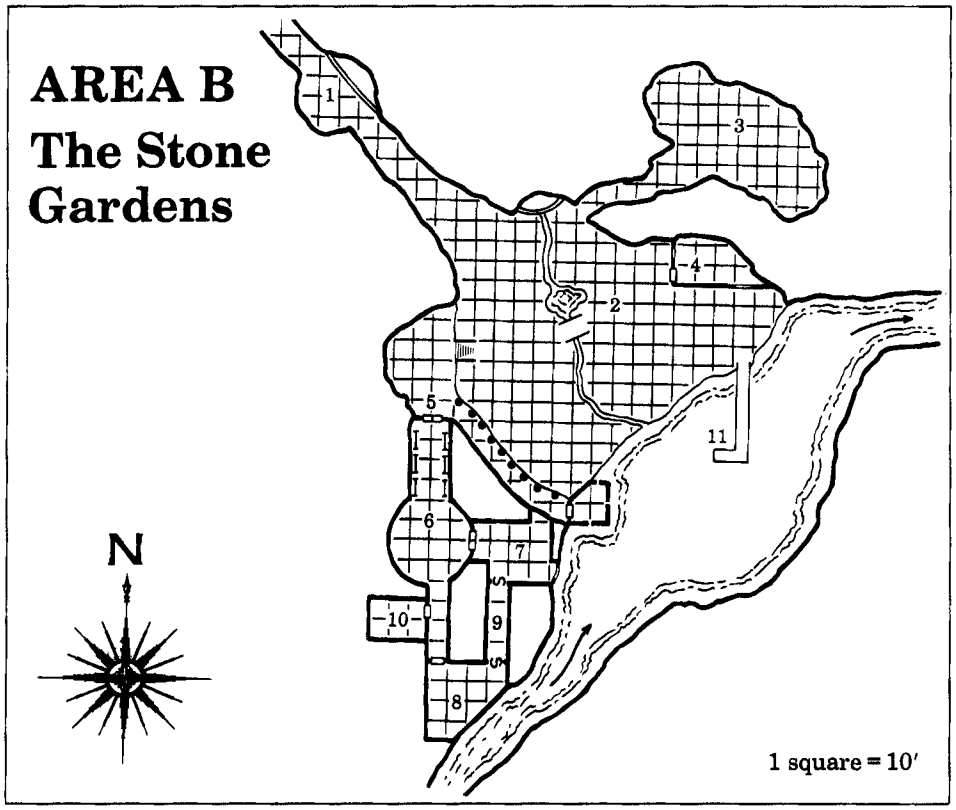
Whatever else she may be, Madame Narcosa is very civilized. Her door is always staffed by two of her butler undead, polite and powerful ju-ju zombies. If the PCs are on their good behavior, Xavier and Ferdinand lead the party to the top of the stairs by the arcade (area B5), where they are asked to produce calling cards. If the PCs attack, the butlers counter with a fierce, twisted joy. They live for the rare occasions when visitors make themselves unwelcome. The zombies are not foolish, though, and call for help as they enter battle. They are, of necessity, very dedicated to their mistress. Since they don't need to breathe, they will walk through fire or water to serve her.

The pool in the entrance cave is 15' deep and very cold. Condensation from the walls drips into the pool, and the water gradually drains out through cracks in the bottom. The glitter on the walls is pyrite, fool's gold. The rugs are too worn and moldy to be valuable.

Xavier and Ferdinand (ju-ju zombies): AC 6; MV 9; HD 3+12; hp 29, 26; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; SA strikes as 6-HD monster; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; immune to poisons and to *magic missile, charm, hold,* death magic, mind-affecting, electrical, and cold-based spells; half damage from blunt or piercing weapons; turned as spectres; ML special; AL N(E); MC.

B2. The Garden.

The cave walls here are slick and shimmering with jewels. A stone garden of giant fungi in various bright reds, purples, and whites grows wild. Huge treelike umbrella mushrooms and puffballs the size of boulders grow next to the small, cold stream that cuts the cavern in half. The stream flows from a pool by the north wall and pools again in a small basin near the bridge. An arched bridge with rusty iron railings spans the stream.



Madame Narcosa lives in this dark riverside home, protected by her undead servants and engaged in her diabolical studies. The garden fungi are all poisonous, although Madame Narcosa occasionally feeds them to her undead to fool gullible guests. The jewels in the walls are only quartz and mica flecks.

B3. Fungi Fields. Row after row of neatly tended mushrooms grow from wall to wall in this cavern, which provides the mushrooms that feed Madame Narcosa, her apprentice, and occasional guests. The fields are tended and harvested by a crew of seven skeletons in ragged clothing. They are armed with only their sickles and are used only to divert intruders or cover a retreat.

Skeletons (7): AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 4 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold, fear,* and cold-based spells; half damage from edged or piercing weapons; ML special; AL N; MC; sickles.

B4. Apprentice's Cottage.

Inside this thatched building are simple peasant quarters. A loom stands by a window, oil lamps hang from the low rafters, and a bed and low table fill the far corners. An open chest of clothes stands on the packed dirt floor just to the right of the door. Open windows look out onto the cavern grounds.

Madame Narcosa has one outcast drow apprentice named Lythanos. In her heart, Lythanos considers herself superior to her mistress because she is of pure drow blood. Lythanos attempts to disguise her disgust at Narcosa's inferior blood by giving her fawning attention and devotion. This is all too obvious to Narcosa, who plans to replace her apprentice as soon as possible (certainly within the next decade).

Lythanos: AC 6; MV 15; F2/M2; hp 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 10, D 18, C 9, I 16, W 16, Ch 16; SD 52% magic resistance; ML 13; AL CE; short sword, dagger; drow spells: *dancing lights, faerie fire, darkness, clairvoyance, detect lie, suggestion, dispel magic;* mage spells: *firewater* (see *Unearthed Arcana), shield.* Lythanos wears black boots, a black cloak, and blue silk tunics and trousers that set off her bright blue eyes.

B5. Arcade.

An elevated set of arches and fluted columns runs the length of the stone garden. Damp stairs ooze up 10' to the level of the arcade, which looks out over the garden and the river. The arcade runs along the cavern walls to a watchtower near the docks.

Three figures guard the door at the top of the stairs. Two skeletal footmen wearing decaying livery carry halberds and stand on either side of the door. The third is a butler in a tail coat who stands directly in front of the iron portal, holding a tarnished silver platter in one hand.

Vincent, the **ju-ju zombie** butler (hp 19; see area B1 for statistics), has been instructed to ask visitors for their calling cards, which he is to take inside to his mistress. The skeletons merely rattle their halberds if someone attempts to enter. They do not attack unless the PCs enter unaccompanied by Vincent or Madame Narcosa. In that case, the **skeletons** (hp 8 each; see area B3 for statistics) attack from behind with a −1 to surprise (2nd Edition *DMG,* page 102).

Madame Narcosa will grant a visit to almost anyone, but the PCs will have to wait 5-8 rounds and take in all the scenery first. During this time, Narcosa will cast *protection from normal missiles, resist fire,* and *water walk* on herself, and a *wyvern watch* on the doors into her bedchamber (area B7).

B6. Parlor and Dining Hall.

A hall with three floor-length mirrors on either side leads to a sumptuously decadent room. An oval table of pale white wood in the center of the room is set with a silver candelabrum studded with blue stones. A tall mirror in a gilt frame stands behind a carved black chair that looks like a mass of serpents with eyes and fangs. A female drow reclines in the chair, a tiny smile tugging at her lips. She gestures toward a decanter of wine and a large bowl of fresh mushrooms on the table before her. "Make yourselves welcome. I am Madame Narcosa. What brings you here?"

Narcosa is the daughter of a drow high priestess and a captured human mage. As a half-drow, she was spurned by her mother and rejected by drow society. She became a scavenger on the streets of the deep drow city of Angrimm until she took up with a frustrated male magicker whom she followed, pestered, and worked for as a slave until he finally accepted her as an apprentice.

In time they became lovers, as is often the case in drow society between masters and servants, but eventually Narcosa surpassed her lover's magical skill and he grew resentful. She had little sympathy for him and betrayed her tutor, taking his black velvet-covered spell books (entitled *Wormatia;* see area B7) to begin her own career as a mage. She fled the city of Angrimm and renamed herself Madame Narcosa.

Madame Narcosa: AC 6; MV 15; M7/C7; hp 30; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 12, D 16, C 11, I 16, W 18, Ch 15; ML 18; AL NE; *wand of petrification, dagger +2, ring of warmth, ring of protection +2,* two gold rings (20 gp value each), scrolls of *protection from magic* and *protection from petrification,* scroll of five spells: *sleep, charm person, identify, phantasmal force, polymorph other.* Drow spells: *dancing lights, faerie fire, darkness, detect magic, know alignment, levitate, clairvoyance, detect lie, suggestion, dispel magic;* mage spells: *charm person, identify, sleep, unseen servant, invisibility, magic mouth, mirror image, protection from normal missiles, spectral force, polymorph other;* cleric spells: *cause light wounds, command, cure light wounds* (×2), *sanctuary, hold person, resist fire, silence 15' radius, withdraw, wyvern watch, animate dead, continual light, water walk, cure serious wounds, poison.*

Narcosa could become a strange ally of the party members because of their mutual need to defeat the derro, but she could just as easily destroy the PCs if they betrayed her.

The candelabrum on the table is studded with aquamarines and worth 2,000 gp (weight 10 lbs.). The chair is ebony and worth 600 gp (weight 30 lbs.). The table is made of bleached oak but isn't especially valuable or portable. Madame Narcosa has no interest in coins or other wealth that cannot be displayed and appreciated.

B7. Bedchamber.

A rather spartan room, the bedchamber's only luxury is a narrow window overlooking the river. The bed is a simple pile of soft fungi covered with linen. The only real piece of furniture is a stone washstand that holds a wash basin, a pitcher of water, and a low vase of carefully arranged fungi in colors of pale green, dark brown, and toadstool red. A chamber pot sits beneath the washstand.

A *magic mouth* placed on the foot-wide window shouts "Get out, you nasty boy!" whenever a living creature larger than a mouse passes through it. The Laetan River is 20' below. The outer walls of Madame Narcosa's dwelling are rough and offer many hand- and footholds but are wet and very slippery.

The only treasure here is *Wormatia,* Narcosa's four large volumes of spells. Three volumes are old, bound in well-worn black velvet, but one slim volume is new and covered in giant lizard hide. Each volume weighs 40 lbs. and contains one level of spells from first to fourth.

The title page of each volume is inscribed with a single rune. The rune in the first three volumes is a spirally coiled dragon embossed in tarnished silver. The rune in the fourth book is a stylized hemlock leaf inscribed in black ink. Each of these rune pages hides spells protected by a *secret page* spell. The protected spells (one per volume, in order) are *shocking grasp, darkness 15' radius, secret page,* and *Evard's black tentacles.* In addition to those spells Madame Narcosa has memorized, the books contain: *firewater, mount, read magic, deeppockets, ESP, Melf's acid arrow,* and *blink.* The command words for the secret pages are "drake" for the first- to third-level spell books and "drink me" for the fourth-level book. The command words must be spoken in the drow speech.

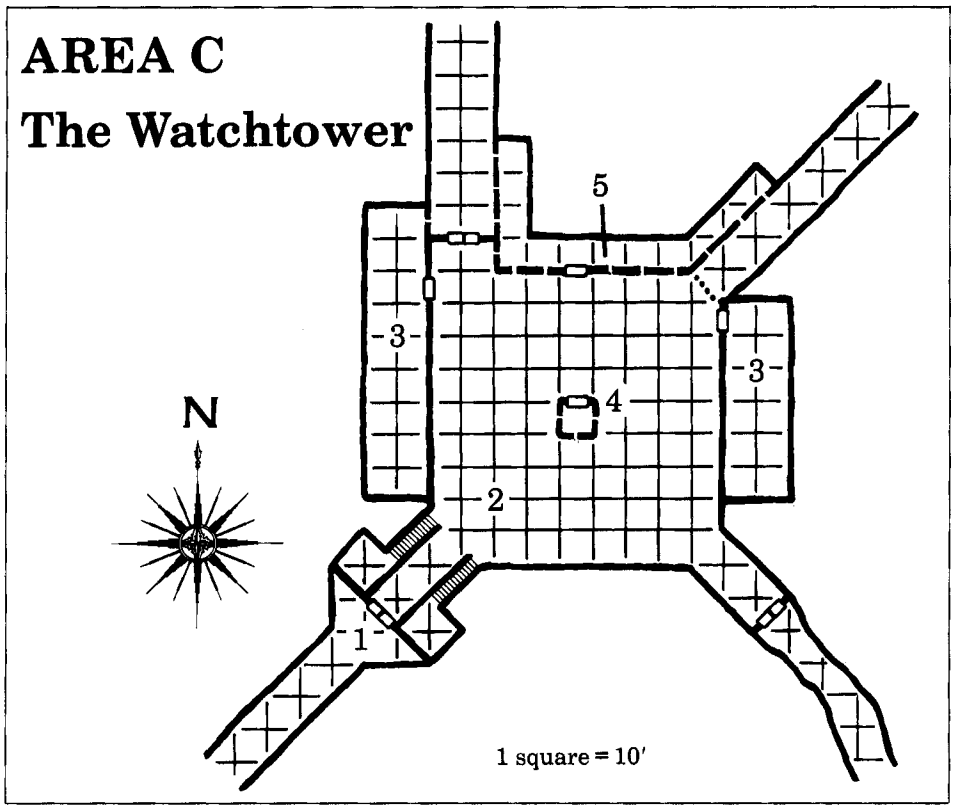
B8. The Laboratory.

A wide array of bottles, carefully labeled in drow characters, fills the room's tidy shelves. There is also a silvery tray holding a clear decanter and a small round bottle of green liquid. A workbench holds stacked boxes and a line of bottles, also labeled in faded drow script. In the southwest corner, a small black altar

surrounded by dried skin, untanned bat fur, tiny bones, and maggots stands before a grim, fat statue of a demon. The statue's eyes seem to glow with a baleful light.

This room is always locked and is barred from the inside. Madame Narcosa usually approaches it by the secret passage (area B9). Most of the bottles contain harmless herbal extracts and disgusting gels, but there are some dangerous exceptions. The crystal decanter on the silver serving tray (worth 10 gp and 50 gp respectively) contains a colorless potion of laudanum (opium in alcohol), which requires that the drinker save vs. poison or rest in dream-haunted sleep for 6-36 turns. A small round bottle next to the decanter contains absinthe, a bitter green liqueur made with anise, wormwood, and other aromatics. Absinthe can be used as a tonic for stomachache and intestinal parasites, but it is also a potent alcoholic beverage and a mild narcotic. The glass bottle that holds it is a 1-gp curiosity.

The small labeled boxes contain powdered wolf's bane, a yew-berry rosary,



dried nightshade, real scarabs and carved ivory copies (seven, worth 3 gp each), a whole death's head moth, yellow mold spores, giant spider venom, and tin hip flasks of poisoned burgundy (save vs. poison for 4-16 hp damage, 2-8 hp with save). A rack of unlabeled bottles contains two *philters of love* (for pacifying opponents too powerful to defeat in combat) and a small ceramic flask of *oil of slipperiness.*

The far southwest corner of the lab serves as a small shrine to Orcus, Narcosa's patron deity. The statue's eyes are actually black opals worth 5,000 gp each.

B9. Secret Passage. This passage leads from Narcosa's bedchamber (area B7) to the laboratory (area B8). The doors are operated by pressing in and rotating small flagstones in front of them. A *magic mouth* set in the center of the passage shouts "What are you doing here?" whenever anyone other than Madame Narcosa enters the passage.

B10. Kitchen.

This kitchen is rather ordinary, with copper pots and pans; tin bowls and tankards; a few ordinary herbs and spices; a collection of Underdark meats such as rat, lizard, and bat; and a variety of mushrooms, edible mosses, and aquatic plants.

Smoke from the kitchen hearth can be diverted, by shifting the flues and vents, to the gardens or the parlor as a security device. This smoke obscures all vision and makes breathing difficult. See the *DSG,* pages 36-37, for additional information on the effects of smoke.

B11. Dock.

Lanterns light the dock and reflect amber light off the black, sluggish flow of an underground river. Moss and lichens grow on the stones at the waterline, and faintly glowing water plants illuminate the barnacles just under the river surface. There are four boats tied up here: a punt, a coracle, a canoe, and a gondola.

The punt and the gondola are perfect for poling along the placid Laeten River, which rarely flows faster than 20' per round. The coracle and canoe can be taken up the Iskellion River (see area F). The boats are always guarded by the tower watchman, the **ju-ju zombie** Randolph (hp 25; see area B1 for complete statistics).

Twenty years ago, the derro rechanneled the Iskellion River (see area F10) so that its water was added to the Laeten River, thus changing the pattern of the underground watershed. Although there was some minor flooding then, the docks here are still in fine shape after three centuries of service.

C. The Watchtower. To protect the main cavern area, the ancient dwarven house of Arzhoun built a set of gates and a courtyard cavern to serve as a military strongpoint between the upper world and the central dwarven halls. Now this watchtower serves the derro against Madame Narcosa, the drow enchantress (see area B), in much the same way.

C1. The Gate.

The outside of the gate ahead of you is studded with wooden spikes covered with bronze leaf, and the battlements on top probably give a good view of any approaching strangers. You can occasionally see a short, pale shape in the darkness on top of the right tower.

The gate is always manned by two **derro archers** (hp 15, 14; D 15, 18) and two **derro hook warriors** (hp 18, 16; D 17, 16) who yell for help if anyone shows up, whether the newcomers seem friendly or not.

C2. The Inner Court.

The interior of the underground fortress is a large courtyard littered with piles of reeking garbage upon which grow colonies of slime and mold. A single square tower stands in the center of the court, extending to the ceiling 20' above and pierced with crossbow slits. Near two exits across from you are giant lizards in harness. Their riders are shouting and urging their steeds into the passages.

Two female **derro messengers** (AC 9; HD 2; hp 10 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1;

Dmg by weapon type; D 15 each; ML 10; short swords) mounted on giant lizards wait here. They spur their mounts to the mining outpost (area D) and the Shadow Kingdom (area F) at the least sign of trouble. These messengers are lightly armed, so they avoid encounters. If battle is unavoidable, they try to force their ways through by letting the giant lizards claw past any resistance. If the derro succeed in taking their message farther into the derro realm, the gargoyles, miners, and warriors of the Shadow Kingdom will be alerted and may launch an expedition to ambush the PCs at some convenient site.

Giant lizards (2): AC 5; MV 15; HD 3+1; hp 20, 16; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA double damage on a to-hit roll of 20 (with continuous damage thereafter); ML 8; AL N; MC.

There are four exits from this crossroads cavern. The PCs presumably enter from the southwest. The northern and northeastern passages lead to the derro territories; the southeastern tunnel leads to the Laeten River.

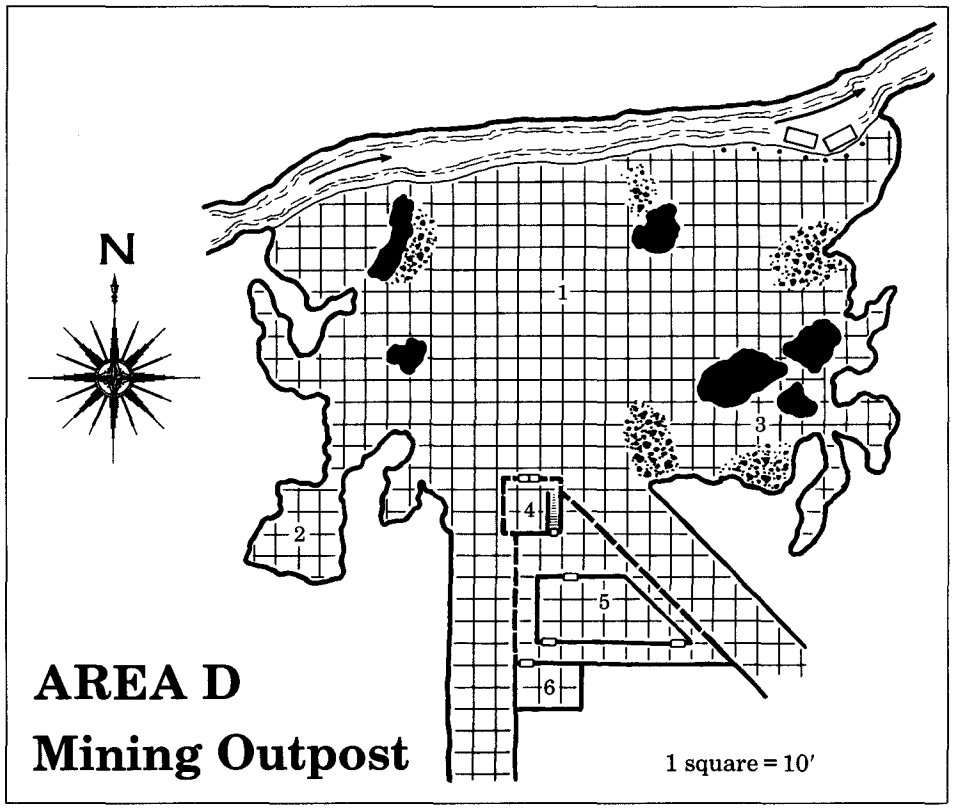
C3. The Barracks.

These rooms are filthy pens, with tables, casks, beds, bedding, utensils, and tableware scattered all over. There are six derro here; two are awake and playing dice, and four are asleep on their bundles of rags.

The derro reserves here spend their time gambling, guzzling bad ale, sleeping it off, and making rude remarks to the female messengers. If the party can sneak in undetected, it takes the sleeping derro three rounds to grasp what is going on. If the derro have been alerted, the sleepers are just waking up as the party enters (those four cannot attack for a full round as they grab weapons and shields; they sleep in their armor, however). The six **derro spear warriors** (hp 15 each; D 18, 17 (×2), 16 (×2, 15) are much too lazy and rebellious to go out and fight if it is not their shift. They have 40 gp total and a pair of ivory dice worth 20 gp.

C4. The Tower.

A 10′-square tower extends from floor to ceiling in the center of the courtyard. It has a single iron door at floor level. Crossbow slits look out over all sides from 20′ up.



Four **derro archers** (hp 13 each; D 17 each; each also has a club) always stand guard here. If there is a disturbance at the gate, they sound the alarm with a deep gong. These warriors are relieved only once every tenday, and their living quarters reflect this. There is a 10% chance that they are all asleep when a disturbance breaks out. The crossbow derro will not leave the tower nor let anyone in for any reason. The door is always barred from the inside.

C5. Shooting Gallery. This dusty corridor is used to pepper invaders with crossbow fire if they get into the inner courtyard. It is usually unmanned, but derro defenders will gather here if enemies penetrate the fortress.

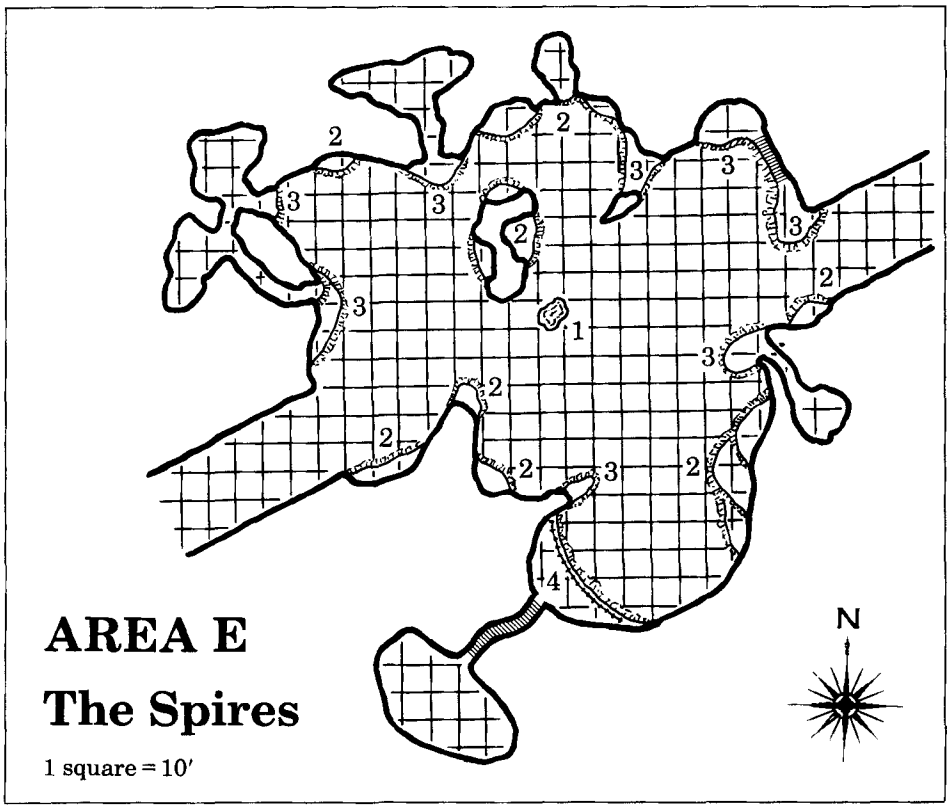
D. Mining Outpost. This ancient dwarven mine follows a rich vein of iron and thus is being fully exploited by the derro. It is connected to their main kingdom by the stream that the ore barges use and by a tunnel leading to the watchtower (area C). Although the mines' origins go even farther back than the dwarves, it has never been expanded greatly because the ore here is so plentiful and easy to mine.

D1. Main Gallery.

The walls of this large cave are an orange color, perhaps due to some kind of mineral deposit. Piles of muddy orange rocks are heaped up next to the creeping black river that borders the northern side of the cavern. Two small barges, ready to transport cargo, sit moored to great rusty iron posts at the eastern part of the stream. There are also smaller mounds of dark stone and rubble scattered everywhere.

This large cave serves as the ore storage area. Four **derro aklys warriors** (hp 13 each; D 15 (×2), 17 (×2); each also has a whip) are always on duty here, cracking their whips over two shifts of slaves around the clock. They keep two death dogs nearby to spur the slaves on and two more at the entrances to keep watch down the passages.

Death dogs (4): AC 7; MV 12; HD 2+1; hp 19, 13 (×2), 10; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1-10/1-10; SA disease, knockdown; ML 11; AL NE; MC.



The 56 captured slaves are 24 dwarves, three gnomes, 28 goblins, and a single drow. Half of the slaves are sleeping in area D2, one quarter are carrying ore into the main gallery, and the remainder are working in area D3. Dwarves and gnomes make up one shift; the rest make up the other.

Dwarven and gnome slaves: AC 10; MV 6; HD 1; hp 5 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 7; AL LG, LN, N; MC; footman picks.

Drow slave (female): As per dwarven slaves; MV 15; HD 1d6; hp 4; THAC0 20; AL CE.

Goblin slaves: As per dwarven slaves; HD 1 – 1; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; AL LE.

The overseers cut the barges loose and attempt to flee on them if they are overwhelmed. Since the poles and paddles used for steering are kept in the overseer's quarters, any barge cut loose from its moorings eventually arrives at the main derro cavern or goes over a waterfall shortly thereafter (see area F2). Normally, the barges are loaded up and floated down to the derro homeland with a load of slaves, who provide the labor to bring them back upstream. The barges are currently empty.

D2. Slave Quarters.

This room is rather barren and dismal, with 25 occupied beds of dry, crumbly moss along the walls. It is completely free of dirt or dust, but snores echo softly off the stone walls.

The overseers force the slaves to keep their quarters clean and well organized, but the room is always occupied either by the dwarves and gnomes or by the goblins and drow. Just as the quarters are kept clean to keep the slaves healthy, the two shifts are kept separated to prevent losses from slaves fighting among themselves. If any PC or NPC has been captured, he will be kept here in manacles with the dwarves (see area A4).

D3. Mines.

The mine tunnels are like burrows, with tiny hollows and side tunnels running off in all directions. Tools and piles of ore and rock are everywhere underfoot, and the twisting passages don't let your light penetrate more than a few paces ahead.

Since the walls themselves are almost pure iron ore here, mining consists of simply hacking out sections and taking them to the smelter. The uneven nature of the passages make them ideal for ambushes or defensive combat, so the derro or the slaves may hole up here in a pitched battle. Although the area is honeycombed with passages up and down, only a few of the mine shafts extend off the map, since the ore is so rich and concentrated in a limited area. Those passages that do extend farther out follow the veins of pure iron to a maximum distance of 200 yards.

D4. Guard Tower. A tower near the south entrance commands a view of the entire cavern and extends 20' up to the roof. Inside its iron doors is a stair leading up to the overseers' quarters on the second floor. Crossbow slits cover all approaches, and the doors can be barred from the inside.

D5. Overseers' Quarters.

This large barracks holds six bunk beds (some occupied), a large wooden table where a card game is in progress, some solid stone blocks that serve as stools, an open cask, and a small kitchen hearth with food and a single filthy iron pot. A derro stands by the fire, slurping soup out of his bowl.

Eight off-duty overseers spend their time here sleeping, gambling, drinking, and bullying one another. They are all disgraced **derro hook warriors** (hp 17 (×4), 15 (×4); D 16 each; each also has a whip). Six of the overseers are White Bat cultists (see "For the Dungeon Master" for details). To make up for the shame of their low status, all of the overseers wear gauntlets and carry whips even when not on duty. None of them trust or respect each other, and they are constantly plotting and scheming to score a coup and return home in triumph, leaving the others behind.

D6. Storage.

This cool room is packed with gear of all kinds: paddles and poles for barges, boxes and kegs of food and drink, racks of mining tools, heaps of iron manacles for slaves and prisoners, and stacks of extra clothing and bedding.

This room is part of the overseers' upper level and is always locked. If any character was captured by the cultists at area A, his possessions can be found here. The room's usual contents are ordinary but may prove useful to PCs needing to resupply their expedition. The manacles will be used to restrain any characters captured as slaves until the overseers are convinced that their new charges are broken in.

E. The Spires. This lofty cavern of ledges and small caves is independent from the rest of the derro realm although it is located only a few miles away. The huge arching cavern belongs to a tribe of gargoyles and margoyles ruled by a crafty, overweight margoyle matriarch. They are allied with the derro but are independent in terms of food, politics, and defense.

Although the 'goyles generally leave the derro alone, the tribe attacks anything else, swooping down from all sides. Tailkiller, the tribe's matriarch, has taught the gargoyles to split up into two groups. Six try to land squarely on central party members (use grappling or overbearing), and 10 slash and land in the faces of the outer protective ring of any party to keep fighters busy. Allow the second group of gargoyles a rake attack (using the natural, roosterlike spurs on their heels for 1-3 hp each) on any fighter foolish enough to turn his back. The arched ceiling here is 90' high at its highest point, allowing the creatures plenty of room to maneuver.

If direct assault fails, the margoyles hide against the stonework and make sneak attacks. Meanwhile, the gargoyles lift into the air any smaller party members they can grab, then either drop them onto the rocks or take the combat up to the lofts, where individuals can be isolated and dispatched.

Gargoyles (16): hp 31, 30, 28, 27, 25, 23 (×2), 22 (×2), 21, 20, 19 (×2), 17 (×2), 15; SA rake attack; for complete statistics, see the Underdark Encounters table.

Margoyles (8): AC 2; MV 6, Fl 12 (C); HD 6; hp 38 (×2); 29, 28, 27, 26, 25, 21; THAC0 15; #AT 4; Dmg 1-6/1-6/2-8/2-8; SA rake attack; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, 80% undetectable against stone; ML 10; AL CE; MM2/83.

Tailkiller (margoyle): As above; MV 6, Fl 9 (D); HD 8; hp 48; THAC0 13; Dmg 1-8/1-8/2-8/3-12; see area E4.

E1. Pool.

A small clear pool of water has collected in the center of this tall cavern. Its sandy bottom is less than a foot under the surface.

This pool provides water for the gargoyles; bats, insects, and adventurers provide their food. The water is drinkable but otherwise unremarkable.

E2. Lofts.

These low ledges are small and covered with old bones, offal, and other putrid trash. Gargoyles perching on them have left deep claw scratches on all surfaces within reach. There is no treasure to be seen.

The margoyles are nobles and attendants to the tribes' ruler, but the gargoyles are merely her subjects. They live in the smallest, lowest, and most crowded of the caves and ledges.

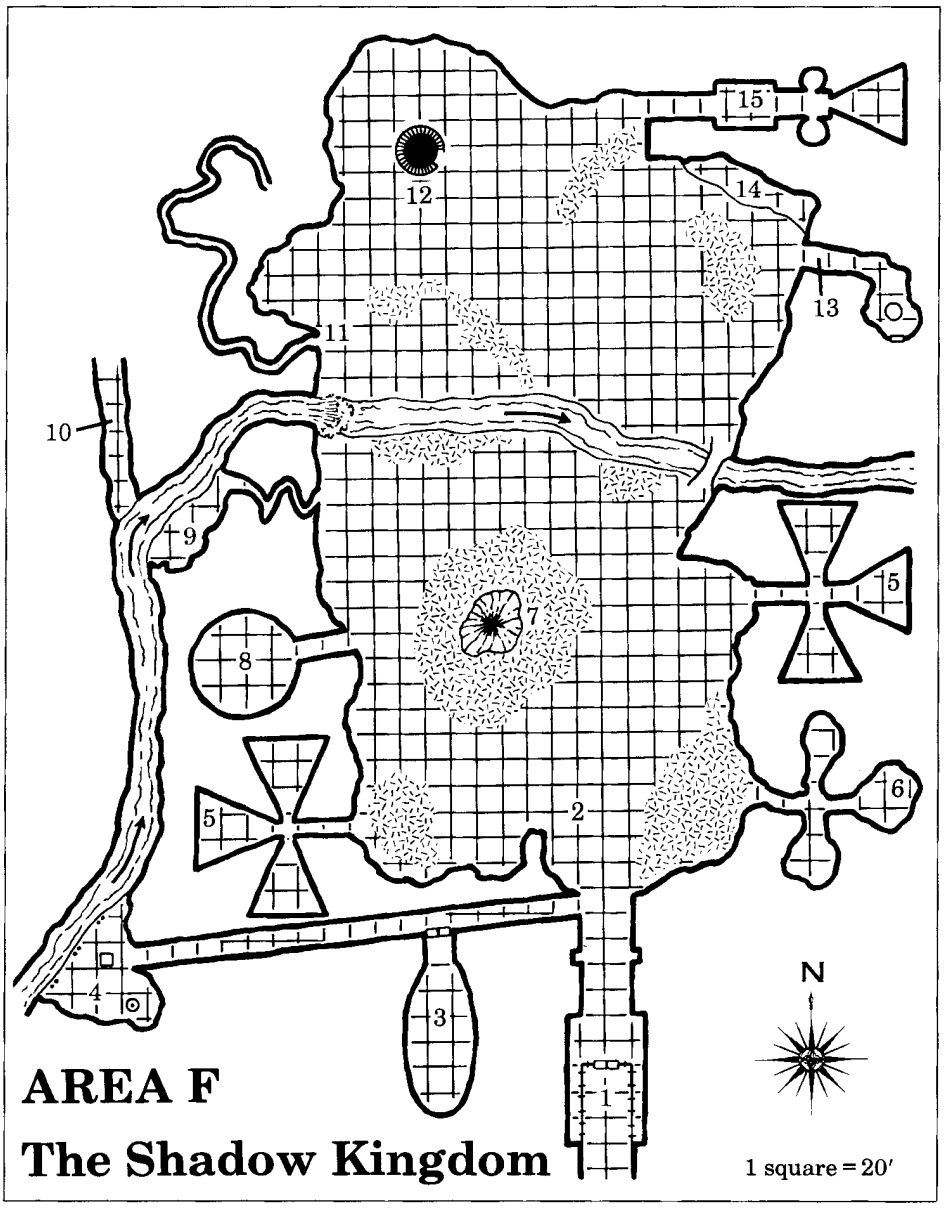
E3. The Stone Court.

The higher perches are cleaner than the lower ones, although a few large rocks and neat piles of garbage sit by the edge of most of the ledges. There is no treasure, but many of the ledges have entrances that lead into caves in the rock walls.

The margoyles' homes are better kept than those of the gargoyles because the stony creatures enjoy dropping their garbage on their neighbors below. The margoyles prefer to attack from ambush when their opponents get their backs to a wall, but they will fight if Tailkiller is threatened. The gargoyles get out of the way when the margoyles enter combat.

E4. The High Perch.

The highest ledge—80' up—is more like a balcony, with a carved railing and level surface. A set of stairs leads farther up and into the rock. The cave at the top of the stairs is littered with broken weapons, bits of cheap jewelry, coins, untanned skins



(including one cloaker skin), an inkpot and penknife, an illegible map, some dried deep-blue fungi, and a filthy shawl of glittering cloth-of-gold and purple silk.

Tailkiller is an immensely fat and powerful margoyle. Her flight has become slow and clumsy, but she enjoys watching battles from her large and comfortable ledge. She still joins in battles if her tribe is suffering losses, wearing a cloaker skin from the pile in the cave to confuse her enemies. Vanquished foes are carried up to her cave, since Tailkiller never hunts anymore. Her eggs are generally laid elsewhere and left untended, but her treasure is closely guarded. The ruined shawl is her favorite for everyday wear. The gargoyles and margoyles have amassed 2,000 gp and 3,000 sp in addition to Tailkiller's huge junk collection.

F. The Shadow Kingdom. Formerly known as Hammerkeep, the unfinished dwarven halls are now home to a group of derro, the tribe of the White Bat. Although most of Hammerkeep was hollowed out by the dwarven house of Arzhoun, it was carefully constructed to resemble natural stone. The work the derro added later (such as the diversion of the Iskellion River at area F10 and the market at area F8) is much cruder and bears obvious traces of toolwork.

The Shadow Kingdom is the largest of the caverns that the House of Arzhoun constructed, and is the hub of a network of mines, fortifications, fields of fungi, shrines, and exits to the surface, most of which are not occupied by humanoid societies any longer. This Underdark region could easily be expanded with additional sites as the DM wishes.

F1. The Trap.

You see food in the passage ahead; giant mushrooms line the corridor. In the distance there is a metallic glint.

The main gate is made of highly polished iron. It was constructed by the Arzhouns to be nearly impregnable. The derro have added shriekers and violet fungi to warn them of unwanted guests and to make stealthy assault difficult.

The organized derro counterattacks with carrion crawlers and their use of military tactics and poison make them dangerous adversaries. In addition, the derro have genius-level intelligence, but this is not as dangerous as it might be if they were not chaotic evil. As it is, they often kill each other instead of working together. Thus, their group tactics seem disorganized, but they are surprisingly intelligent when faced alone. In either case, a frontal assault might prove suicidal. The DM should carefully consider their tactics.

The derro occasionally feed the four shriekers and two violet fungi that live about 50 yards from the first of the crossbow slits that line both sides of the entry. The violet fungi make the mushroom patch a first line of defense. As soon as the derro hear the shrieks and see surface dwellers, they begin firing their crossbows into the gate area at random. The mushroom creatures can be replaced every three days if adventurers launch repeated assaults. The shriekers respond to light within 30' or movement within 10'. The violet fungi attack only and do not shriek.

Shriekers (4): AC 7; MV 1; HD 3; hp 20, 19, 18, 8; THAC0 17; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SA noise; ML special; AL N; MM1/87.

Violet fungi (2): AC 7; MV 1; HD 3; hp 16 each; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg nil; SA rotting; ML special; AL N; MM1/42.

Beyond the fungi, a series of 20 crossbow slits 10′ up on both side walls extends for 100 yards just before the gate. These slits are well hidden from below, tucked into cracks and shadowy niches by superior dwarven masonry. Four **derro archers** (hp 13 each; D 17 each; each also has a short sword) use poisoned bolts to discourage visitors. If the gate is breached, the guards charge down to fight.

The derro make up for their small numbers by keeping four carrion crawlers on the ceiling just inside the gate. Two of the crawlers are resting at any time (one round delay before entering battle). A **derro spear corporal** (hp 25; D 15) handles the carrion crawlers and keeps the sentries in line. He commands battles from the rear and is quick to send for help. The sergeant keeps 4 gp and a 50-gp gem in his belt pouch.

Carrion crawlers (4): AC 3/7; MV 12; HD 3+1; hp 16, 14, 12, 10; #AT 8 or 1; Dmg special or 1-2; SA paralysis, multiple attacks; ML special; AL N; MC.

F2. The Realm.

Beyond the gate, you walk up a tunnel lined with many beautiful carvings and mosaics ruined by both neglect and deliberate damage. Suddenly you find yourself above ground, outside! The nighttime landscape is rocky, and you seem to be at the bottom of a bare cliff. The moon is high in the sky, and stars twinkle high above you. The ground itself is rough and alien, overgrown with masses of dark red and purple fungi that cling to the rocks at your feet.

A gorge separates the near and far sides of the great canyon, and a rushing waterfall plunges into the gorge from the rocks on the left. A bridge or ledge on the right side of the canyon crosses the stream and its gorge. On the far side of the drop-off, the ground is higher and too far away too see clearly. The only thing you can make out is a tall tower with brightly lit windows. The dark fungi grow there as well.

These are the halls the Arzhoun hollowed out for themselves. The illusion of being under the open sky is very convincing; let the PCs figure it out for themselves. The dwarves' greatest achievement is the moon, which they called the Ship of Night. It appears exactly the same size as the moon in the outside world and is projected onto the cavern ceiling from a mechanism in the central crater (area F7). The stars are round chips of marret (see area G) set into the ceiling in a pattern resembling the constellations of the southern hemisphere. The ceiling is 150′ up and cannot be seen from the ground unless magic is used.

Growing everywhere is fireweed, an edible, fire-resistant fungus that feeds on geothermal heat, photosynthesizing in the infrared portion of the spectrum. Fireweed can hide anything within it from infravision, to which it appears black and cold (it is visible to derro ultravision, however). To normal sight it appears black, purple, and finally red as it ages and grows to heights of 15′ or more. Fireweed is spongy and cannot be burned but grows rapidly when exposed to intense heat. It is brittle and crumbly when dry. Movement through living fireweed is much like movement through dense bushes and shrubbery and is limited to 10′ per round.

The gorge was widened when the derro allowed the Iskellion River to come in and flood a tunnel to their enemy, Madame Narcosa, in an attempt to drown her (see area B11). The gorge is now used as a garbage dump. The waterfall drops 100′ to the bottom of the gorge (40′ to the cave level, and 60′ more to the bottom of the gorge). The far side of the gorge is 10′ higher than the rest of the cavern.

There are many exits into the "cliff walls" from the main cavern. The tunnels to the dungeon, warrior's chambers, forge, foraging nets, and main gate are unguarded. Those to the female chambers and the tramway station are guarded as described in areas F6 and F11.

F3. Council Chamber. This room is dusty and abandoned, though a few boxes of dried fish and some stacks of pig iron are stored here. The sound of hammering at the forge (area F4) can be heard from here. The passage leading from here to the smithy is a steep climb.

F4. Barge Dock and Smithy.

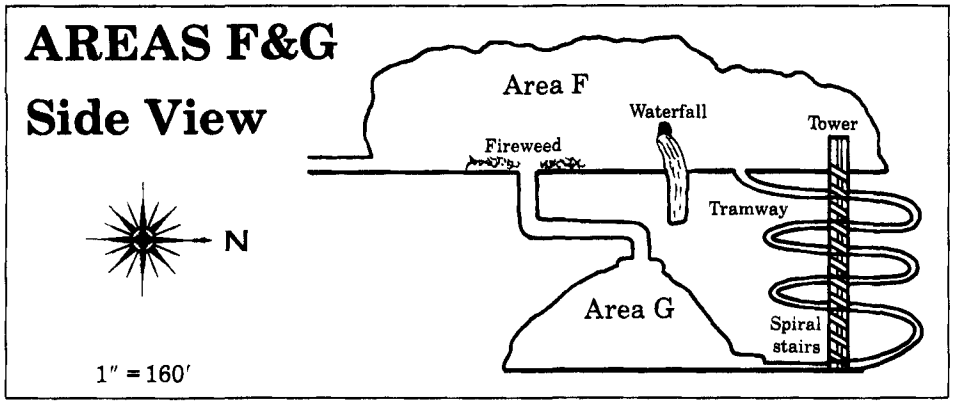
Heaps of brown coal and iron ore are scattered against the walls. An unused smelter stands next to the forge. Four derro are working at the forge, one pumping the bellows while the others heat and hammer the iron.

Two **derro spear warriors** (hp 17 each; D 15 each; each also has a hammer) and a **derro spear sergeant** (hp 20; D 16; also has a hammer) are doing the metalworking while a female **derro outcast** (AC 7; MV 9; HD 2; hp 10; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg by weapon type; D 17; ML 10; unarmed and unarmored) pumps the bellows. The ringing of hammers and the rush of air from the bellows makes the smiths easier to surprise (−2 to their roll, as per 2nd Edition *DMG,* page 102). The sergeant supervises and gives advice but keeps his armor on and weapons ready. The warriors are stripped to the skin (their armor and weapons lie against a wall in a heap) and are working furiously with their hammers. They have been given this duty as punishment and would love to take their frustrations out on someone, though if things go against them they will jump in the river and raise the alarm at area F9. The outcast tries to stay out of their way. She begs the party to free her and will assist them as long as she is still in the derro regions of the Underdark. The outcast will travel with the PCs only until she can slip away safely.

The waterfall can be heard from here when the forge is silent. Boats coming down the Iskellion River can hear the forge from 100 yards upstream and the waterfall from 100′ upstream. The docks here are primitive, consisting of simple posts of stout fungi to which barges can be tied. There are no barges here now, as they are all at the mines (area D) waiting for an ore shipment to be loaded. The forge is of excellent dwarven design, though it is very worn and somewhat antiquated. The smelter is rarely used, but the slag heap of impurities next to it has grown into a part of the wall over the centuries.

F5. Warriors' Chambers.

An archway leads into this clean room full of cots and stone benches carved out of the walls. The room is occupied by resting derro warriors. Their extra armor and weapons lie scattered about the room, but all the



equipment is bright and well polished. The rooms are swept clean, but the beds aren't made.

Each of these sets of caverns is divided into two halls for the troops and one for officers. The middle hall is home to a **derro spear sergeant** (hp 23; D 18) pick) and three **derro spear corporals** (hp 19 each; D 17 each). Each officer has 5d20 10-gp gems and 3d10 50-gp gems, as well as 10d100 gp in various coins, most minted by aboveground realms.

The other two halls in each set are home to four **derro warriors** (hp 13 each; D 16 each). Two of them are derro archers, one is a derro spear warrior, and one is a derro hook warrior. They own 5 gp and one 10-gp gem each.

If the PCs are discovered here, the warriors pour out to engage them, shouting for help. One derro warrior may go for help as well.

F6. Women's Chambers.

The 5'-high tunnel through the fireweed leads to a set of rough caves that smell vaguely like mushroom soup. You can see into three caves from an intersection carved into the rock beyond the fireweed. The caves are smoky from cooking fires, whose light illuminates crowds of derro women and children.

It is difficult to spot the tunnel by casual observation, and a **derro hook warrior** (hp 15; D 17) stands watch within the entrance at all times. These living chambers were never completed by the dwarves and have recently been converted for the use of the derro women and children. The male derro are extremely possessive of their wives and children, and treat them like property or slaves. Women and children are expected to gather and cook fish and fireweed, tend and repair all household items, and obey all warriors' requests. The 13 *derro children* (AC 10; MV 6; HD 1 – 1; hp 2 each; #AT nil; SD 30% magic resistance; ML 8; AL CE; MM2/42) are tended by 11 **female derro** (AC 9; MV 9; HD 2; hp 9 each; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg by weapon type; SD 30% magic resistance; D 15 each; ML 10; AL CE; MM2/42; unarmored). The female derro are allowed to leave only to harvest fireweed and go to the market. They use their sickles (Dmg 1-4) to attack any intruders.

F7. Crater.

After forcing your way through masses of fireweed, you arrive at the edge of a deep pit. The hole is about 15' wide and slopes downward abruptly, like a crater. Light is streaming up from below.

Hidden within the central mass of fireweed is the crater that projects the moon and stars from a cavern room below. A clever mechanism of gears and mirrors takes the light of phosphorescent stone far below the cavern and reflects it to appear as a cratered moon that rises every 24 hours and sets 12 hours later (see area G for details of how this is done). The crater tunnel is 60' deep and leads down to a huge silvered mirror (valuable but practically immovable). Despite Birgit's grand plans, this mirror cannot be duplicated elsewhere because the sophisticated mirror-making techniques developed by the house of Arzhoun have been lost. However, the gears and other equipment could be repaired or replaced if enough effort were put into the job.

Anyone who climbs down into the crater will eclipse the moon, thus warning the derro of the presence of intruders in the cavern. During the 12 hours that the moon isn't out, the descent is safe, but the PCs will have to provide their own illumination in the pit.

F8. Market.

A market is in progress here. The trading tables are crowded with brass and shell gewgaws, shiny necklaces strung on the spines of dead and inflated puffer fish, leathery mushroom skins, salted fish, bits of river flotsam, crude shoes, pottery, boots and garments dyed in deep shades of purple, brown, and blue.

This large cavern near the waterfall was originally designed to be another set of halls for the dwarves but was never completely cleared. The derro dug out the dividing walls to make way for a market plaza. Because of the derro reputation for oath-breaking and general mayhem, few traders feel inclined to visit, but a few brave creatures of other races do come here once every tenday to trade. Between market days, the derro sell items they have made or found. There are always 2-20 customers, mostly **female derro** (see statistics in area F6) escorted by 2-5 off-duty **derro spear warriors** (hp 13 each; D 16 each), and 2-12 **derro traders** (as per derro archers; hp 15 each; D 15 each; each also has a short sword). On market day, their numbers increase by 1-10 outsiders: a mixed bunch of drow, dark creepers and stalkers, duergar, goblins, and even troglodytes. The relevant statistics should be created by the DM if he feels the party needs the challenge.

The wares sold here are serviceable but not particularly valuable. Clothing, for example, is dyed with fireweed, mushrooms, or the scales of dark fish from the river. However, one small table sells puffer-fish ovaries, which provide a potent poison (Type J ingested; see 2nd Edition *DMG*, page 73).

F9. Flotsam Nets.

The river flows through a rough cavern here, and the walls echo the sound of the nearby waterfall. Large nets strung across the water are

watched by two derro women who are talking to one another by the river's edge and dangling their feet in the water. A dark passageway is visible across the river.

These nets catch any underground fish, fungi, junk, and drowned creatures that the river carries along. They are usually tended by two **female derro** (see statistics in area F6) who spend their time gossiping and throwing rocks into the river. They don't mind visitors if the strangers have interesting stories to tell, but they don't have any information to share in return.

A suspension bridge once led across to the tunnel on the other side, but only the supports remain. The river is 12′ deep here and moves at 160′ per round.

F10. Old Riverbed.

The circular tunnel here has been worn smooth by years of rushing water but is now relatively dry. Moisture drips from the walls, and round stones and sand lie in scattered heaps. The area appears deserted.

Before the derro carved the new channel, this was the bed of the Iskellion River. Now it is simply another passage leading to the derro realm, and a poorly defended one at that. This tunnel leads to deeper realms of darkness: the Great Cloaker Rift, a minor drow city, and lava flows (see area F15 and "Concluding the Adventure").

F11. Tramway Station.

The passage slopes steeply downward. After several hundred feet of travel over old rubble, when you're sure you're beneath the stronghold itself, an arched entrance comes in sight. The archway is carved with figures representing the constellations. Inside is a 40′ × 40′ room with a pair of iron rails embedded in the floor. The rails lead down beyond a second archway, this one carved with the sun chasing the moon.

Two **derro aklys warriors** (hp 18, 17; D 17, 15) always watch over the entry to this passage in order to prevent unauthorized entry. The guards are well equipped but bored, and have a −1 chance to be surprised (2nd Edition *DMG*, page 102). They serve the derro savants, who want to keep the secrets of the moon-machinery to themselves, though the derro king and his lieutenant also know of this area.

The tramway station area was used by the dwarves as a staging and storage area for moving equipment to the phosphorescent moon image (see area G) while construction was still ongoing. The main access tunnel to the station was deliberately collapsed after the construction was finished to prevent easy access and interference. Built long ago by the Arzhoun clan, this area is now entirely abandoned by the derro, who see no use for it. Halfway down the rails to area G is an ancient wooden cart with its brakes locked. If the PCs ride the cart down the rest of the way, it glides to a smooth stop four minutes later. The tunnel is about a third of a mile long (1,700′), descending 240′ below the main cavern in a series of steep switchbacks.

F12. Tower of Enemies.

This 40'-tall, 20'-wide tower is made of black basalt elaborately carved in deep relief and surrounded by an external staircase of ordinary stone. Its windows are all lit.

The derro savants who live here are the founders and leading members of the Cult of the White Bat. Though the white bat is the totem of the entire tribe, the savants have taken this worship one step farther. They believe that their magical abilities are a gift given to elite members of the tribe at birth by a spirit called the White Bat (not a real deity; these derro have no priests). In addition, they hold services and gatherings to further the White Bat's wishes. The leader of the savants is also the leader of the cult, but other members include certain trusted warriors, most of the overseers at the mine, and even an old derro crone, who receives favors from the cultists in exchange for a steady supply of fresh fireweed. The Tower of Enemies is the center of the cult's operations, which are kept secret from the king and most of the derro underlings.

At the top of the tower lives Whiskers, a derro savant and contender for the throne on King Rynhard's death. He is never without his *wand of petrification* (see following text). Whiskers is the nominal leader of the Cult of the White Bat, but all of the savants are members. Only Whiskers and his apprentices understand the brewing of *phase potions* (see end of module).

Whiskers (derro savant): As per derro aklys leader; HD 8; hp 38; D 18; *studded leather armor +1, spiked buckler +1, wand of petrification* (20 charges), *Keoghtom's ointment* (four applications), *phase potion;* spells: *affect normal fires, blink, ESP* (×2), *ice storm, levitate, paralyzation, ventriloquism, wall of fog.*

The *wand of petrification* that Whiskers carries is made of ivory tipped with obsidian and has 20 charges. Anyone failing to save vs. petrification is not only turned to stone but also *teleported* to the top of the Tower of Enemies to join the 80 other unfortunates who form its walls. These include dwarves, humans, troglodytes, dark creepers, goblins, a giant lizard, an umber hulk, gargoyles, drow, and others. Live gargoyles enjoy lurking here and frightening the apprentices (the DM may add them if he wishes).

Nerezar is a derro savant and the leader of a faction opposed to Whiskers.

Nerezar (derro savant): As per derro aklys lieutenant; HD 6/10; hp 17/41; THAC0 15/11; *wand of flame extinguishing,* potion of *super heroism, goblet of paralyzation, robe of scales* (see following text); spells: *affect normal fires, light, minor creation, ESP, levitate* (×2). The statistics after the slash refer to the savant's abilities after drinking the potion of *super heroism.*

Nerezar wears red copper armbands and copper-colored robes embroidered with gold thread. His *robe of scales* is magical scale mail made from copper dragon scales in the form of a mage's robe. The robe provides base AC 6 protection. His *goblet of paralyzation* acts as a *paralyzation* spell on everyone within 60' who fails to make a saving throw vs. spells. It is activated by filling it with liquid and then rubbing the lip of the glass to produce a ringing sound. Nerezar's *wand of flame extinguishing* is made of pine wood and tipped with a miniature iron shovel head. It has 70 charges and is used primarily to extinguish his apprentice's *brazier of sleep smoke* from a distance. The savant can use the brazier to summon a fire elemental.

Fire elemental: AC 2; MV 12; HD 12; hp 54; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA set fires; SD +2 or better weapon to hit; ML 16; AL N; MC.

On the lowest floor are the quarters of the three apprentices who serve the greater savants, copying books and mixing inks and potions. Arosticon is Nerezar's apprentice, and Sparkle and Stonewing are Whiskers' apprentices.

Aristocon (derro student savant): As per derro aklys corporal; hp 25; D 18; *brazier of sleep smoke;* spells: *anti-magic shell, ESP.* Arosticon is the youngest of the apprentices.

Sparkle (derro student savant): As per derro aklys corporal; hp 21; D 17; *phase potion,* scroll of *forget* and *Tenser's floating disc;* spells: *light, minor creation, charm person.* Sparkle is rather flashy and brash for an apprentice.

Stonewing (derro student savant): As per derro archer corporal; HD 4/6; hp 18/39; THAC0 17/15; potion of *heroism;* spells: *minor creation, hypnotic pattern.* Because of his intensely ugly features, Stonewing is a good friend of the gargoyles and the margoyles. Consequently, the gargoyles insisted that he be the derro's main emissary to them, and this gives Stonewing quite a bit of status. If the gargoyles see him being threatened or harmed, they immediately come to his defense. In addition, Stonewing often brews a potion of *heroism* for his own use; statistics after the slash reflect his abilities while under the potion's influence.

A trapdoor in the floor (concealed by a rug) leads to a spiral staircase down to area G. The bones of the goblins who carved the stairs lie at the bottom of the shaft. The iron door at the bottom of the stairs is always locked, though the savants carry keys. Nerezar, Arosticon, and Stonewing will use this escape route if they see things are going against them, and will try to make their final stand on the moonscape. Whiskers and Sparkle will use their *phase potions* to sink through the floor as they become insubstantial, giving the adventurers a clue that the derro point of last resort is below the main complex.

F13. Dungeon.

A low wooden platform sits in the center of this crudely carved cavern. Rusty tools lie scattered about the floor, and there is an iron door in the far wall barred from this side. A tiny window in the door shows dusty stairs leading down.

This dungeon was entirely built by the derro. The rusty tools are instruments of torture, though this isn't obvious. The prison itself is a 20'-diameter pit that is roofed over by the platform, except in the very center where a wooden lid covers the 5'-diameter hole through which prisoners are lowered (or thrown). The top of the pit is narrower than the bottom, giving it a sort of bottle shape. At one time, the bottom of the pit could reached by spiral stairs that wind through the stone around the outside of the pit. Although the door at the bottom of the stairs is still open, the stairway has collapsed along 15' of its length, and the upper door is barred. In the dungeon are two drow skeletons, stripped to the bones by insects and other underground scavengers.

F14. Gargoyle Perch. Hidden by the darkness of the cavern's ceiling, a group of 10 loyal but lazy **gargoyles** (hp 20 each; see Underdark Encounters table) and eight haughty **margoyles** (hp 25 each; see area E) live on a 100'-high ledge in the northeast corner of the cavern. The gargoyles serve the derro as

allies and scouts in exchange for food and shelter. If they see any derro being attacked, especially Stonewing (see area F12) or the king (area F15), they fly to the defense. The gargoyles keep 500 gp, 3,000 sp, and two 500-gp amethysts on the ledge.

The margoyles, however, feel no great need to serve the derro unless it suits their whims, as they consider themselves equal to the derro. They are likely to aid the king out of self-interest, but other situations call for the DM's judgment. The margoyles live in the realm because of the opportunity to bully the gargoyles and live in relative safety.

The gargoyles and margoyles can be used by the DM as reserves if the PCs make quick work of the first few derro they meet. The monsters don't want to lose their home, treasure, and patrons to a group of vagabond surface dwellers. They have 20 100-gp gems in a nest of bones, rotted clothes, and jumbled gear. If this is carefully searched, taking one turn minimum, the remains of a drow elf wearing *elven chain mail +2* can be found. This armor will fit only an elf.

F15. King's Chambers.

This room is heaped with faded, tattered wealth: ragged carpets, scratched chairs and tables of rare woods, fraying tapestries, and mounds of old cushions. An aging derro sits in the largest of the chairs, poring over a map on the table in front of him. Three younger derro stand on the other side of the table.

The ruler of the Shadow Kingdom is the aging lord of the White Bat tribe, **King Rynhart** (as per derro aklys leader; hp 31; D 15; *wings of flying, ring of protection +3).* The king is still strong but no longer fills out his ancient robes, which hang in great loose folds from his sagging shoulders. He wears an iron crown, intricately quilted scarlet robes to keep warm, and curly toed embroidered yellow slippers. The *wings of flying* resemble gargoyle wings and are worn only in battle; otherwise they are kept under his mattress.

The triangular room to the east is the king's bedroom, filled with antique furniture, moldy carpets and wall hangings, and dozens of minor trinkets (of the DM's invention) from all over this area of the Underdark. The king's treasury is kept in a locked chest under the bed and consists of 400 gp, a 1,000-gp opal, a 1,000-gp emerald, a 2,000-gp ruby, a scroll of *protection from undead,* and a vial of *oil of fire resistance.* The map he is examining shows the underground world near the Great Cloaker Rift (see area F10 and "Concluding the Adventure").

The northern round room was cleaned out months ago. The southern round room is a shrine to Abbathor. A tin statue of this deity sits at the back wall; Rynhard was too stingy to commission a better idol. There are also three large egg shapes here: one red, one gold, and one the creamy color of bone or ivory. The red and bone eggs are nonmagical, but the gold *egg of desire* causes all who see it to save vs. spells or leave all their precious metals in front of it and *forget* what happened (*Unearthed Arcana,* page 99).

The king is always attended by **Artang,** his closest assistant (as per derro spear lieutenant; hp 37; Str 18, D 18; spear +1) and two **elite derro** (as per derro spear sergeants; hp 30, 24; S 16, D 17), all of whom will fight to the death to protect him. These three derro are much more spartan than their liege, wearing only armor, black boots, and gray cloaks.

If there is a battle between the PCs and the savants, Artang and the guards attempt to escort the king to safety by avoiding the battle on their way to area F11. As a mark of his status, the king always travels in his sedan chair, an elaborate, 30-lb. construct of maple, walnut, gold leaf, green roof tiles, and tiger-eye gemstones worth 6,000 gp intact but only 400 gp if broken up. It takes two people to carry the sedan chair. The bodyguards carry the king and his chair, while Artang enlists the aid of the gargoyles and margoyles at area F14 to provide protection. Artang leaves the gargoyles, margoyles, and guards (already at area F11) to watch the tunnel entrance while the king and his bodyguards go down to the moonscape (area G).

If the king is slain, a power struggle develops between Artang and Whiskers. The savant eventually wins the throne with the help of the White Bat cult's influence. He thereafter pursues a policy of more aggressive derro interference in other parts of the Underdark and on the surface.

Although Rynhart is still very much in command of his tribe at the moment, he and his inner circle of officers are completely unaware of the activities of the White Bat cultists. The savants have kept their activities on the surface secret because they know Rynhart was soundly defeated by surface dwellers long ago and would oppose any contact with the upper world. The king's officers have always assumed that one of them will be anointed Rynhard's successor upon the king's death, and they discount the savants as meddling fools without ambition. They are wrong.

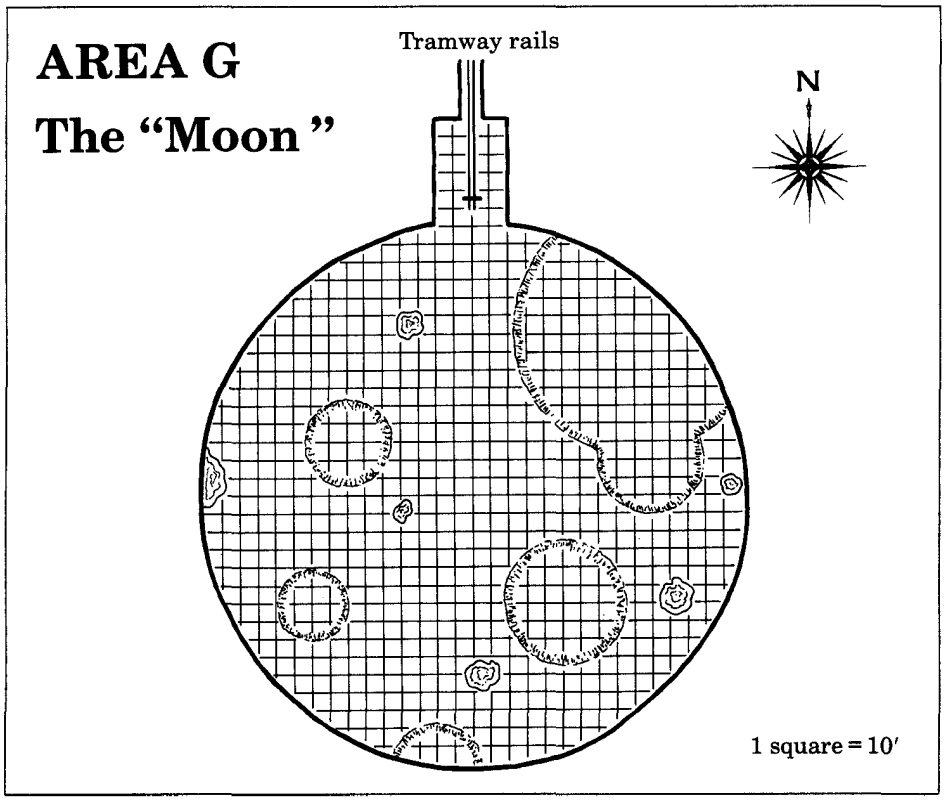
For the short term, the White Bat cult acts as a unified group, but in the long run, chaotic tendencies will destroy the cult from within. Unfortunately, that could take decades. The opposition group of savants (lead by Nerezar) will form a splinter group, leading perhaps to open warfare within the cult. This split will be delayed for some time if the derro must unite to meet an outside threat (the PCs or the drow, for example). The splinter group will have some support from the lieutenant and other officers, depending on how much power the savants promise the warriors.

G. Under the Moon.

It is very quiet in this cavern. The ground itself glows pale white and is pitted with small, mossy craters. The nearest section is overgrown with small blue mushrooms. Tiny white moths flutter everywhere and reflect the light, looking like fireflies.

The floor of this huge, 100'-high domed space is carved from marret, a rare stone found occasionally in the Underdark, that glows fluorescent white like a weak *continual light* spell. Unlike other phosphorescent stones, marret doesn't need to be illuminated by an outside source before it will glow. Dwarven sages attribute this to a sort of magical leakage from the Positive Material plane. Marret is sometimes used as an ingredient in spells, potions, and other magical items.

The Arzhoun sculpted the marret floor here to resemble the surface of the moon. The light from this area is first collected by a series of mirrors covering the upper surface of the dome, then concentrated by bouncing it off a mirrored globe in the middle of the cavern. This bright light is reflected off two additional silvered mirrors to take it to



the bottom of the crater (area F7). The passage down the long, black tunnel reduces scatter and aligns the light, giving a sharper final image. At the bottom of the crater, the light is reflected off a final, mobile lens that turns to make the moon rise and set.

Destroying any of these mirrors or lenses either destroys or mars the image of the moon. The only parts of the mechanism that are expendable are the additional filters that provide a yellowish-orange color near the "horizon" and the occluder that makes the moon wax and wane every 28 days. This equipment is positioned at the bottom of the crater, but the mechanism has rusted solid and is no longer functional. The design of the mechanism can be inferred by Tamara or any dwarf or gnome with a good mechanical background. The loss of the filters and the occluder means that moon is now permanently full, a sure clue to its artificial nature to observant parties who view it for extended periods of time.

If light-producing spells such as *light, fireball,* or *lightning bolt* are used on the moonscape, they will be seen as bright lights or flashes on the surface of the projected moon in area F2. The noise of any explosions will be muffled by the turns of the long passages up to the main realm but may still be heard by alert guards. In any case, the light will be enough to tell the savants that something is wrong below. They will immediately organize an expedition to bottle up or pursue the parties responsible.

Climbing up to the gearworks is impossible without the use of a *spider climb* spell. The PCs could also *fly* or *levitate,* or travel down the tunnel from area F11 or use the stairs below area F12 in the main cavern.

The tramway receiving station at the north end of the cavern is much like the upper station and connects directly to the moonscape surface. It is relatively dark, carved from ordinary stone. Its archway features struggling dwarves, mining carts, and heroic engineers and architects.

The blue mushrooms are a dwarven delicacy called Oldarten mushrooms and worth up to 1 gp each to dwarven chefs. Tamara will not tell the party this, fearing that they will decimate the entire supply here, but she will try to take some for herself. Tiny silver-white button mushrooms grow in the shadows of the craters; they are very difficult to spot and are essential to the preparation of the *phase potions* that the White Bat cultists use. These potions, brewed in the tramway receiving station, are essential for the expansion plans of the cult. The savants (and possibly King Rynhart) will make their final stand here, using their knowledge of the stairs, tramway, and gearwork tunnel to surround the party. If this plan fails, the derro may escape through the gearworks by using their *levitate* spells.

The moonscape is inhabited by seven scuttling, darting ustilagor that attack all strangers who enter their territory. The ustilagor retreat into the smaller craters if badly hurt. They attack separately and without regard for each other. The derro savants know enough to avoid them and will try to lead the PCs into wasting their energies in fighting the creatures.

Ustilagor (7): AC 5; MV 9; HD 3+3; hp 21, 19, 18, 17, 16, 13, 12; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; SA alkaline fluids, psionic *telempathic projection;* SD psionic *energy control,* immune to mind-affecting spells; ML special; AL N(E); MM2/122.

The entire territory is ruled by a meld of 21 myconids.

Myconids (21): AC 10; MV 9; HD 6 (king), 5 (×4), 4 (×4), 3 (×4), 2 (×4), 1 (×4); hp 32 (king), 25 (×4), 20 (×4), 15 (×4), 10 (×4), 5 (×4); THAC0 15 (×5), 17 (×8), 19 (×8); #AT 1 (two-hand strike); Dmg 1d4×HD; SA spore clouds; SD poisonous skin; ML 9; AL LN; MM2/94).

The myconids' only treasures are potions made from the mosses and molds that grow everywhere below the main cavern, fed by moisture from the stream above. Adventurers with fungi identification skills should have a better chance to recognize these items, which include potions of *clairaudience, clairvoyance, delusion, diminution, growth, poison, speed,* and *vitality.*

The myconids remain neutral in any struggle between the PCs and the derro but will use their spores to defend themselves if they are attacked or if large areas of the mosses and mushrooms are uprooted.

Concluding the Adventure

Birgit will reward a successful adventuring company with its choice of infor-

mation, scrolls, maps, or gold. If Tamara accompanied the party, she will contradict any attempts to lie to Birgit. If Tamara died during the expedition, Birgit will hold the PCs personally responsible (regardless of the facts of the case) and will not rest until her niece is avenged either by the party or by a dwarven raiding expedition. A major falling-out with Birgit would bring shame and the enmity of many dwarven clans upon the party.

The adventurers might be invited to join a dwarven expedition of reconquest if they report that the derro have been weakened, and if Tamara's report on the PCs is good. If King Rynhard has been killed, the Cult of the White Bat will immediately come out into the open and begin taking slaves from the scattered surface settlements. Unless the PCs intervene again, the settlers will have few defenses against derro armed with *phase potions,* poison, and their twisted genius-level intelligence.

If the PCs wish, they could lead the dwarven attack, or they could explore farther into this region of the Underdark. The dry, twisting riverbed could lead to the deep and dangerous Great Cloaker Rift, where noxious fumes and mists make travel unsafe even for flying creatures. The River Laeten could run through the homeland of the drow tribe from which Madame Narcosa fled, or to the lair of Mount Hotenow's fire elementals and the warm headwaters of the Neverwinter River.

Phase potion

Phase potion, which is related to *oil of etherealness,* is more useful for general combat. When imbibed, this potion allows the user to shift in and out of phase with the Prime Material plane at will, much like a phase spider. When out of phase, the user is impervious to all forms of attack except those that reach into the Ethereal plane. A *phase door* spell forces the user to remain in phase for seven rounds. Even when in phase, the user is surrounded by a fiery nimbus of white fire, the trace of the portal to the Ethereal plane.

In addition to being able to shift himself to the Ethereal plane, the user may take up to 60 lbs. of material with him. Inert gear can be taken automatically simply by touching it and willing it to come along, but a living creature is entitled to a save vs. spells at −2 if it does not wish to go with the potion user. These effects last for 5d8 rounds.

Phase potions are brewed from phase-spider ichor or from the concentrated juices of rare underground fungi.

XP Value: 800 **GP Value:** 2,000 Ω

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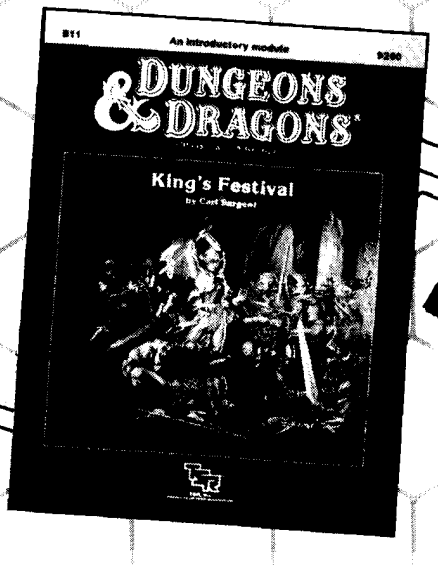

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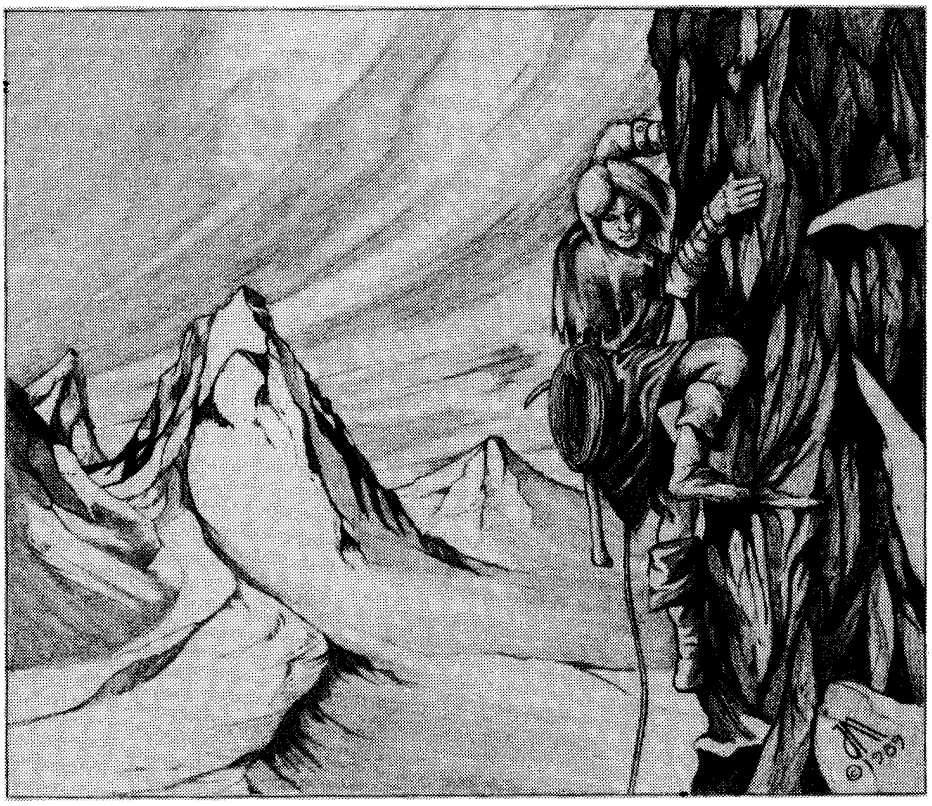


WHITE FANG

BY NIGEL D. FINDLEY

This mountain has a deadly bite.

Artwork by Jeff Menges

*Apart from a number of TSR projects (*Thieves of Lankhmar *is the first), Nigel is working on a feature article on desktop publishing for a national business magazine, writing a biweekly computer column, developing two books, chasing down a television project, and flogging three feature-length screenplays through his agent in L.A. In his spare time, he writes adventure modules for DUNGEON® Adventures (this is his seventh).*

"White Fang" is an AD&D® solo adventure designed for Lykan, the 10th-level thief described on the next page. While this adventure works best with the character provided, you may also use your own character if he or she is of similar level and is similarly equipped.

Though this adventure is compatible with the AD&D 2nd Edition rules, the statistics for the frost giants are drawn from the 1st Edition *Monster Manual.* You can assume that the giants are merely "small" (though dangerous) ones.

Combat is run the same as in a normal AD&D game. Initiative is checked each round before combat unless otherwise stated. Most creatures attack on sight and fight to the death, never checking morale, with certain exceptions noted in the text. The THAC0 score for Lykan does not include his dexterity bonus to missile combat, or his magical and other bonuses to hit; you must add these bonuses.

At times, an option to escape from a monster is given in the text. Lykan may attempt to escape only if an option to do so is given, and then only if his movement rate is higher than his foe's movement rate. A foe always gets one last attack whenever Lykan turns to run, with a +2 bonus to its to-hit roll.

Magical armor and weapons act as they do in a normal adventure. Details on other items are given in the text when they are found. Certain items that Lykan may find have been given special numbers (for example: "You find a copper ring (17)") Be sure to record each item's number, as you will need to know it later. At various times, there are things that happen or options that you have only if you possess one of these special items. When you are told "Something happens if you have the golden key," add the item's number to the number of the section you are currently reading, then go to the section number

that matches the sum to find out what happens.

You are now ready to begin. Start by reading the "Adventure Background," then follow the instructions at the end of each section. Remember, the numbered paragraphs will not make sense if read in order.

Adventure Background

The marketplace you're walking through is like all markets: busy, noisy, dirty, smelly, crowded. But today it's boring. Nothing interesting to purloin from any of the stalls, no city-shocked druid you can con into buying the Westbay Bridge, no square-headed sword swinger whose encumbrance you can reduce by relieving him of his purse. The only affluent person you've seen in the past hour was Fitzroy the Necromancer. No temptation there. You remember seeing what was left of the last thief who tried to cut Fitzroy's purse. Not a pretty sight; enough to put you off roast meat for life.

You feel a tug at the hem of your jerkin. Somebody trying to rob the robber? you wonder as you spin around. But no, it's a beggar huddled miserably on the ground at your feet.

"Noble lord," the unfortunate croaks.

"Not me," you reply cheerily. "You must be talking to someone else."

"Noble lord," he continues, not to be put off. "I have something of great value to one such as yourself. It was given to me by a great friend on his deathbed—a hearty adventurer, he was. Circumstances force to me sell it, and at a pathetically low price, too. Only five gold nobles, my lord. Only five gold nobles for this." He holds up a parchment that's seen better days. The scrawls on it might be a map, but they might just as easily be a caricature of the Overlord himself. There's writing on the back: a tiny, cramped hand laid out in the way you might inscribe a diary or journal.

"What is it?" you ask.

"A map, noble lord. A map to the treasure of White Fang."

If you decide to purchase the map, go to **106.** If you want to ask the beggar for more information, go to **62.** If you don't buy the map, go to **57.**

1

You fold up the parchment and put it in a pouch on your belt, then head toward the livery stables. Sometimes rich travelers can be found around the horses.

Roll percentile dice. If the result is 46 or more, go to **78.** If the result is 45 or less, go to **47.**

2

The wolf hits you like a gray-furred projectile. If your reactions had been a hair slower, those fangs would have met in your throat. As it is, they snap shut a handsbreadth from your face. In desperation, you slam your weapon's pommel into the underside of the powerful jaw and drive a knee into the wolf's ribs. With a snarl of pain and frustration, the wolf draws back for another lunge at your vitals. But this time you're ready, weapon poised. The impact of the wolf's leap is enough to tear the weapon from your numbed hand, but you see the point drive deep into the creature's skull. You step aside as the beast—already dead but not smart enough to know it yet—is carried past you by its own momentum to collapse a moment later in a dusty heap.

A weasel-like head pops out from between two rocks and asks, "Is it safe?"

"No," you snarl, and the head vanishes again.

But it *is* safe, you realize as you look around—or at least as safe as it gets part way up a stinking mountain. The wolf seems to have left his family and friends at home. With two sharp tugs, you extract your sword from the dead wolf and your guide from his sanctuary. "Let's go," you tell him, pointing at the slope of loose, small rocks ("scree," you think it's called) that forms your next obstacle.

If you want to rope up with your guide to climb the treacherous-looking scree slope, go to **96.** If you decide to climb solo, go to **50.**

Lykan
10th-level Human Thief

S	D	C	I	W	Ch
16	17	12	12	11	14

Saving Throws:

Paralyzation, Poison, Death Magic:	11
Rods, Staves, Wands:	10
Petrification, Polymorph:	10
Breath Weapon:	14
Spells:	11

Thief Abilities:

Pick Pockets:	75%
Open Locks:	70%
Find/Remove Traps:	60%
Move Silently:	75%
Hide in Shadows:	65%
Detect Noise:	30%
Climb Walls:	75%
Read Languages:	25%

Armor Class: 2 (*bracers of defense, AC 2);* −1 with dexterity bonus
Movement: 12
Hit Points: 39
Number of Attacks: 1
Base THAC0: 16
Alignment: Chaotic neutral

Weapons:
Short sword +2 (giant slayer; +3 to hit and 2d8 +3 hp damage vs. giants), *dagger* +2, six darts, sling, 24 bullets.

Equipment:
Two days' water in a waterskin, one pint of wine in a wineskin, tinder box, pipe and tobacco pouch, one week's iron rations, backpack.

Weapon Proficiencies:
Short sword, dagger, dart, sling.

If Lykan ever uses a weapon for which he has no proficiency, he attacks with a −3 penalty to hit. Nonweapon proficiencies are not used in this adventure. Missile weapons include the use of a sling, hurled dagger, or other items described in the text.

As Lykan progresses through this adventure, be sure to add any items he finds to the equipment list.

3

There's no room in the kennel for you to maneuver, and the wolf knows it. It tries to use its weight and aggression to drive you back against a wall where it can rip you to shreds. Against the wall is the last place you want to be

You cut at the wolf and hit, but it's not a mortal blow. Great! Now you've gone and made it mad. You swing again, and the wolf grabs your weapon arm in its jaws, pulling you off your feet As you fall to your knees, there's nothing you can do to keep the creature's fangs from your throat

For a moment you feel terror, then wracking sadness. Then your mind goes strangely calm. In death you find peace

4

You peek around the edge of the curtain into what must be a dining room. In the center of the room is a huge table with four giant-scale chairs around it. On the table is a large golden candlestick almost 2' high; the candle adds almost another foot to that. Curious whether the candlestick is pure gold, you pick it up to gauge its weight.

The instant the candlestick leaves the table, the candle lights. You put it down again, but the candle continues to burn You snuff the flame, and try it again Lift the candlestick, the candle lights Convenient for a dinner party, you decide. But it's magic, and unknown magic at that. Is the value of the gold worth the unknown risks?

If you take the candlestick, go to **114.** If you leave it behind, go back to **66** and make another choice.

5

Making the ultimate effort, you cling to consciousness and to the boulder Your arms are almost torn from their sockets, but somehow you manage to hold on For a few moments, you're battered about the head and neck by the minor avalanche you started, but then everything is still—except for your heart. With muscles complaining, you pull yourself back from the edge of the precipice and force yourself to your (somewhat shaky) feet

You're a little the worse for wear, but you're still alive. Go to **32.**

6

It's only a kitchen knife, but in the hands of a giant—and swung with a giant's strength—it's a hideously effective weapon. You duck and dodge, waiting for an opening that never presents itself.

But help comes from an unexpected quarter. The thing in the pot still wants out. Flailing about, it splashes boiling broth onto the back of the giant. He hisses in pain and, while he's distracted, you land the telling blow. He collapses, face down into a pile of disreputable-looking vegetables

You take a quick look at your savior—perhaps you should rescue it. But one look into the pot changes your mind To call the thing slimily reptilian would be an insult to slimy reptiles. You decide it and the giants deserve each other.

Go back to **86** and make another choice.

7

You turn to face the onrushing wolves. Yes, three of them (why couldn't you be wrong for once?).

You have one round in which to use missile weapons, then the wolves are on you. If you have the glowing sling missile, you have an option to use it at this time. If you decide to do so, add its number to the number of this section and turn to the section number of that sum. Otherwise, after your single round of missile combat, go to **39** to fight the remaining wolves

Wolves (3): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 13, 10, 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; AL N; MC.

8

You snort. "In case of a fall, you'll take me down with you," you tell him.

He shakes his head in disgust. "Thirty nobles per day," he says firmly. "Twenty's not enough."

You cuff him across the ear, and with very bad grace he starts up the face.

The first hundred feet of the climb aren't so bad. If you watch carefully, you can see the foot- and handholds your guide is using. Copying his movements, you make good progress. "No tougher than a palace wall," you mutter to yourself.

Of course, that's when your handhold gives way. Go to **100.**

9

The giantess fights fiercely and in almost total silence, which you find to be surprisingly frightening. The only sounds are grunts of exertion, the whoosh of steel cutting air, and the occasional ring of blade on blade.

Sweat stings your eyes, and your arms feel like lead, but your opponent seems as fresh as when the bout started. Duck, bob and weave, and wait for an opening to present itself. The giantess takes a mighty cut at your head, and for a split instant she's overextended—off balance and vulnerable if you can take advantage of it. You lunge, but she dances back in a surprising recovery. You berate yourself for missing what may have been your only chance.

But then she sighs and gazes sadly down at the growing patch of red on her chest She tries to say something, but the effort is too much, and she collapses in a dusty heap.

Lungs on fire, you clean your weapon on the apron she no longer has any use for. For a moment you gaze down at the still body, which somehow looks smaller in death. What's wrong with the world when you can't even kill a giant and feel good about it?

Go back to **119.**

10

For what must be the dozenth time, you kick the spider off your boot and

aim a cut at the scuttling shape. This time you connect, comprehensively splattering the unpleasant thing.

You wipe the spider bits off your blade and (cautiously, in case it had friends) continue your search of the room. Old pots and pans, tarnished cutlery, breadboxes, a dead rat (some giant's forgotten snack?) Then something that gleams like gold.

Because it *is* gold. To a giant, it would probably be a shot glass; to you, it's the size of a wine goblet. Worth a couple of hundred nobles at least, you think as you toss it into your backpack.

Now go back to **66** and make another choice.

11

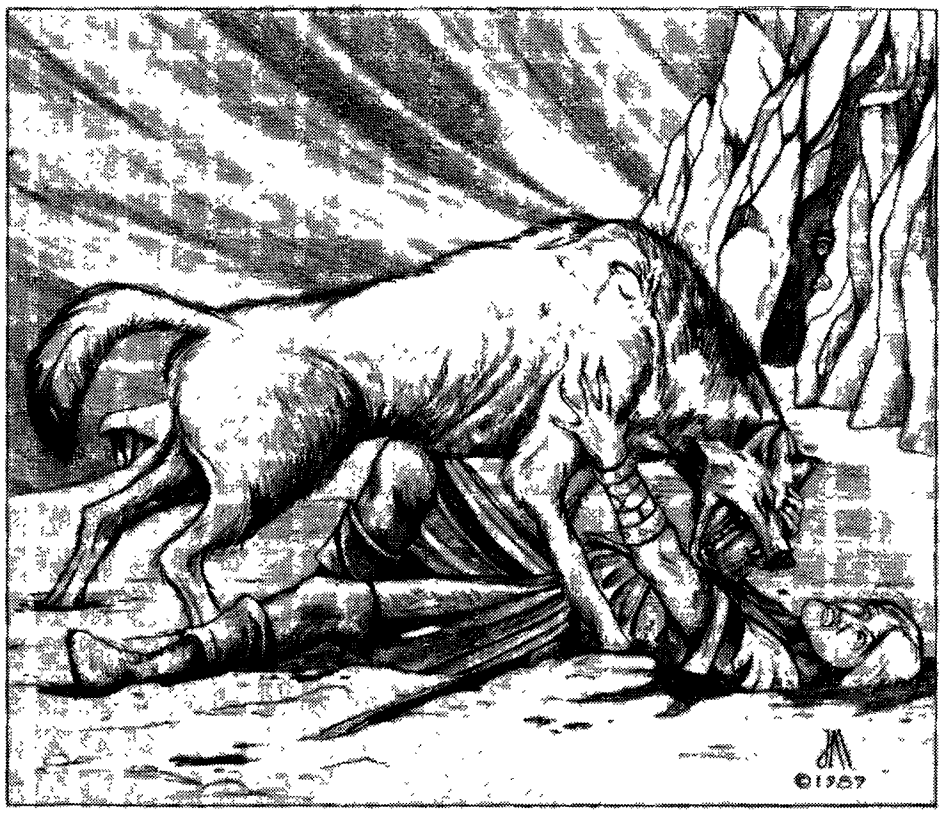
For a few heartbeats, you and wolf regard each other with equal distrust. Then, suddenly, the wolf turns and lopes off, immediately vanishing among the boulders. Even if you wanted to pursue, you wouldn't know where to go.

The beast's behavior was just a little too purposeful for comfort, you decide as you prepare to press on. You remember tales of trained wolves—guardians, sentries, watchmen—and your nerves stretch tighter. Wherever the creature was going, it might be best if you were somewhere else when it gets back.

But no such luck Either the wolf was faster than you thought, or its destination was closer than you expected. You haven't gone more than 50 paces when you hear something large moving among the rocks up-slope from you "Only a giant could make that much noise," you grumble as you crouch under cover of a boulder.

Why couldn't you be wrong for once? The figure making its way toward you is almost twice your 5½′ height. His belt bears a brace of trophies—very human-looking skulls—and a belt knife that looks suspiciously like a notched broad sword (whom did he take it from, you wonder). His long hair is blond, his skin blue-white, and his eyes the same cold gray as his axe-head. His beard is little more than fuzz, you notice. A young giant. Thank the gods for small favors. You pat the short sword by your side. The mage who sold it to you called it "Giant Slayer." Maybe you'll find out if it deserves the name.

The wolf is leaping joyously around the giant's feet, looking like a puppy in comparison to his size At a gesture and a harsh word from the giant, the wolf



runs off the way it had come, obedient as a house-pet (which it probably is). The giant moves steadily toward you. He hasn't seen you yet

If you decide to take advantage of surprise and attack the giant, go to **55.** If instead you try to hide, go to **22.**

12

When you reach into your pouch for a sling missile, your fingers find one that seems to weigh much more than the others. You remember that you found it on the body of the young giant. And you remember its cold (magical?) glow. It hadn't helped *him* much, but maybe your luck's better.

You seat the missile in the sling's pouch, swing the weapon twice around your head, and let loose. The missile strikes the largest wolf and detonates in a silent burst of flame, blowing the wolf asunder. Its partners are staggered by the concussion but keep on coming.

Go to **39** to fight the remaining wolves.

13

The wolves are on you, and you must fight them hand to hand, rolling initiative normally.

Wolves (3 or 2): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 13, 10, 8, THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; AL N; MC

If you defeat the wolves, go to **122.** If you die, go to **81.**

14

One thing's for sure: you've made the young giant forget about his book. A nasty smile spreads across his face—the kind of smile that reminds you that "young" doesn't always mean "innocent"—and he comes at you His weapon (he'd call it a belt knife; you'd call it a short sword) looks very sharp.

Twice, your sword bites and draws blood, but the young giant keeps on coming. And he's still smiling. "Some Giant Slayer," you mutter, adding a few imprecations against the mage who sold you your sword. You continue to back up, waiting for an opening.

Out of the corner of your eye you see the giant's book lying on the floor, but it's too late to stop your foot from landing right on it. The book slides, and you're suddenly off balance. Almost nonchalantly, the giant fells you with his next cut. Go to **17.**

15

Cautiously, as ever, you peek past the curtain into a large bedroom. An equally large female giant is making the bed. She wears an apron, a cloth around her hair, and a dagger on her belt that would serve you as a broad sword. She's also got a tattoo on her bulging left biceps: a skull with a word under it that you don't think is "Mother."

Roll 1d10. If the result is 1-3, go to **23.** If the result is 4-10, go to **54.**

16

No luck. The wolves are too fast. You turn and brace for the attack. The wolves are too close for you to use missile weapons. In a moment they're on you like gray-furred projectiles, and you must fight them hand to hand, rolling initiative normally.

Wolves (3): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 13, 10, 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; AL N; MC.

If you defeat the wolves, go to **122.** If you die, go to **81.**

17

The mortal wound burns like fire, but not for long. As darkness closes in around you, you murmur, "Knew I should have stayed at home." Ω

18

Discretion *is* the better part of valor, you tell yourself as you let the curtain fall and creep away from the portal.

Go back to **105** and make another choice.

19

With a metallic "sproing," a needle drives into your hand.

Make a saving throw vs. poison. If you make your save, go to **25;** if you fail, go to **56.**

20

Cautiously you draw back the curtain, your short sword poised to strike at . . . nothing! It's an empty room, maybe a guest bedroom, but who'd visit up here anyway?

Roll 1d6. If the result is 1 or 2, go to **116.** If the result is 3-6, go to **29.**

21

With a hearty cry of "Yuck!" you shake the nasty beast off your hand and onto the floor, whereupon it leaps onto your foot. You get the feeling that this spider isn't giving up.

You must fight the spider, rolling for initiative normally.

Spider: AC 8; MV 6, Wb 15; HD ½; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison (save at +2 or die); AL N.

If you defeat the spider, go to **10.** If you die, go to **49.**

22

You crouch farther behind your boulder, pressing your body deeper into the shadows.

Roll percentile dice. If the result exceeds your hide-in-shadows percentage, go to **70.** If the result is equal to or less than your hide-in-shadows percentage, go to **63.**

23

The female giant doesn't seem to be aware of you; she just keeps on making the bed. You've got a choice: do you attack her while her back's turned, or do you get out while the getting's good?

If you decide to attack the giant, go to **85.** If you prefer to beat a strategic retreat, go to **38.**

24

Roll percentile dice. If the result is equal to or less than your find-traps percentage, go to **73.** If the result is greater, go to **111.**

25

The wound tingles, then burns . . . but only for a moment. Maybe the poison was old, or the needle didn't hit a blood vessel.

In any case, you take 1-3 hp damage from the needle. If you survive the damage, go to **92.** If you die, go to **65.**

26

The portal opens onto an east-west corridor. Halfway along, there's a curtained portal in the south wall. At the far eastern end is a closed door.

If you want to investigate the portal in the south wall, go to **31.** If you prefer to investigate the door, go to **107.** If you want to leave the hallway, return to **44** and make another choice.

27

The gnome's belt pouch opens easily, and you slip your fingers inside. Suddenly, you feel a grip of iron on your wrist. You fling yourself backward just in time to avoid a dagger cut that might have severed your forearm. Chuckling nastily, the gnome approaches, blade weaving.

You must fight the gnome hand to hand, rolling for initiative normally.

Gnome thief: AC 8; MV 12; T5; hp 14; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; AL CE; leather armor.

If you defeat the gnome, go to **120.** If you lose, go to **89.**

28

Roll percentile dice. If the result is equal to or less than your find-traps percentage, go to **108.** If the roll is higher, go to **19.**

29

You search the room quickly, constantly aware that a giant could happen by to tidy up, and find nothing of interest. While a dead rat might constitute a tasty snack for a frost giant, it doesn't qualify as a worthwhile "find" in your books. Go back to **119.**

30

You start to pick through the garbage in the storeroom. It's probably not the kind of place you'd find the Gem of the Giants, but who knows? Suddenly something drops from the ceiling onto the back of your hand, something black and furry with altogether too many legs.

The spider attacks once with surprise (giving it a +2 bonus to hit).

Spider: AC 8; MV 6, Wb 15; HD ½; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison (save at +2 or die); AL N.

If the spider hits in its free attack, go to **118.** If it misses, go to **21.**

31

Beyond the curtain is a small room, its walls hung with weapons: an armory. There are two-handed swords, pole arms, battle axes—all giant size and much too large for you to even lift, let alone use. But there are some smaller weapons as well: a hand axe that would serve you as a battle axe, and a dagger that would work passably well as a broad sword.

If you are carrying the candlestick from the dining room, something happens. Add the candlestick's number to the number of this section, and turn to the resulting section.

Otherwise, you are free to take any of the weapons you like. Go back to **26** and make another choice.

32

Alone, you finally reach the top of the scree slope and another broad ledge. Exhausted, ankles in agony, you slump to the ground—but only for a moment. Thieves live or die by their instincts, and yours are fine. When you feel like something's watching you, something usually *is* watching you.

As you leap to your feet, you see a pair of cold gray eyes studying you: it's another wolf, maybe two dozen yards away. Your hand steals toward your weapon, but then you hesitate. It hasn't attacked yet and doesn't seem to be planning anything malicious. Should you live and let live, or get your licks in first?

If you decide to attack the wolf, go to **101.** If you wait to see what happens, go to **11.**

33

Almost 100 lbs. of gray-furred fury slams into you, the impact enough to knock you off your feet and your weapon from your hand You grab the hairy throat and drive your thumbs in, searching for its windpipe. But you're too late Its fangs have already found your own throat Go to **17.**

34

You draw your weapon and poise yourself for a backstabbing attack on the giant.

You get a free attack on the first round, with a +4 bonus to hit and quadruple damage if the attack succeeds. In subsequent rounds, the giant fights back with a kitchen knife the size of a broad sword.

Frost giant: AC 4; MV 12; HD 10 + 1; hp 50; THAC0 11, #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SD impervious to cold; AL CE; MM/44.

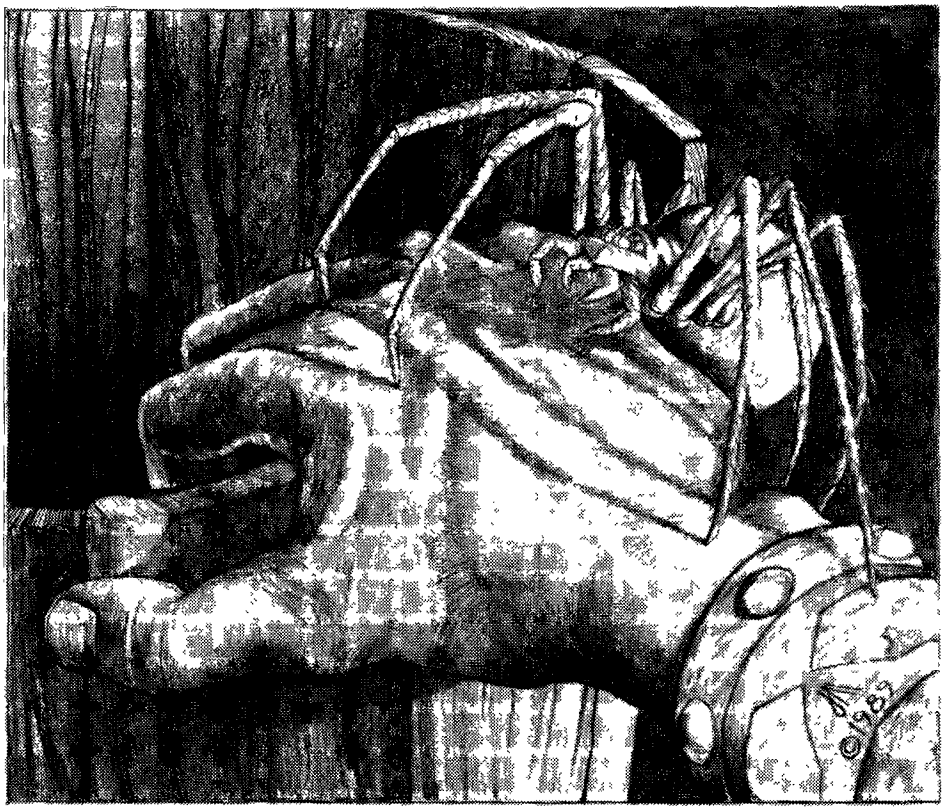
If you defeat the giant, go to **6.** If you lose, go to **77.**

35

The wound tingles, then burns . . . but only for a moment. Luckily for you—and unluckily for the spider—the creature didn't give you the dose of poison it intended. Go to **21.**

36

The giant's axe strikes sparks from the rocks as he swings and misses. He may be young, but his strength is terrifying. If your opponent ever connects with one of his big roundhouse swings, he'll cut you in half. And there's not much you



can do to stop him, either Trying to parry that axe with your short sword would be suicidal. Worse, the axe has a handle almost 5′ long; your short sword's blade is 2′ long There's only one way you could reach him.

Before you have time to talk yourself out of it, you feint to the right, then duck as low as you can The axe blade whistles a handsbreadth over your head, but you hardly notice. In the instant the giant is off balance, you throw yourself forward, slashing viciously upward

Your blade bites home and sinks to the hilt. The young giant looks surprised, then tired Then he collapses Go to **87.**

37

As the giant's muscles work beneath her white skin, the skull tattoo seems to wink at you, then smile nastily. The effect is macabre and hypnotic. You can't force your eyes away from it.

You backpedal quickly, but not quickly enough. You don't actually feel the mortal blow land—you're just suddenly lying on your back, staring upward, with something warm spreading across the front of your jerkin. The skull tattoo seems to float above you, smiling down in triumph.

It's the last thing you see as your vision fades and the world recedes around you. Never trust a woman with a tattoo.

38

Every sound—even the pounding of your heart—seems magnified as you creep away from the portal. Maybe the giant didn't hear you. Maybe . . .

But there's the sound of movement behind you. You glance back just as the giant steps into the hall. You see eyes the size of saucers widen in surprise. Then the huge figure yells something in a booming, harsh language. You can't understand it, but you don't want to wait for a translation

Throwing subtlety to the wind, you simply run like hell out the way you came, bursting through the front door and into the chill air of the mountainside while trying to ignore the commotion behind you.

You pound over the loose rocks, the cold air burning in your lungs. An occasional glance over your shoulder shows

the giant standing in the doorway alone and not pursuing you. Maybe you'll get out of this yet.

But your next glance shows that the giant has been joined by an even larger figure—15′ tall if he's an inch, with a frost-white beard down to his waist and an unsympathetic expression on his face. In his hand is a rock bigger than your head. He hands it to his companion ("After you," you can almost hear him say) and picks up another. Go to **82.**

39

The wolves are on you, and you must fight them hand to hand, rolling initiative normally.

Wolves (3 or 2): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 13, 10, 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; AL N; MC.

If you defeat the wolves, go to **112.** If you die, go to **81.**

40

Despite his (relatively) small size, the giant is frighteningly strong, and his belt knife is razor sharp. But youth and inexperience prove his downfall. The giant leaves an opening in his guard, and you take advantage of it, striking him down with a quick backhand blow. As the body slumps messily to the floor, you hold your breath, praying that no one heard the altercation.

Maybe the gods are listening; there's no sign that anyone else heard the fight. Quickly you search through the room. There's nothing of value except a golden brooch pinned to a cloak in the wardrobe. The workmanship is exquisite, and you estimate the value to be about 1,000 gold nobles. With a grin and a salute to the dead giant, you drop it into your pouch.

To leave the room, return to **105** and make another choice.

41

You feel a tingle in the hand carrying the candlestick, and the candle bursts into light. Luckily the thing was too big to fit in your backpack! "Magic! But what triggered it?" you mutter. Then you notice a small panel opening in the wall next to you, and you see something inside it, glowing in the darkness. You reach in and extract a single dart—a giant-scale dart. In your hand it's the size of a large dagger, but it's balanced for throwing.

The weapon is a *dart +2,* doing 1d4+2 hp damage to or small- or medium-size opponents, and 1d3+2 hp damage to large-size opponents. Its range and armor class adjustment are identical to those of a dagger.

In addition to the dart, you can take any of the other weapons. Now go back to **26** and make another choice.

42

Yellowed teeth snap closed an inch from your throat as you throw yourself backward. You're off balance, and the wolf knows it. Following up its initial advantage, it lunges for you again, but somehow you interpose your weapon, and the blade bites deep. The wolf kicks once, then is still.

There's nothing in the kennel of any value, so return to **26** and make another choice.

43

A boulder slams into your ribs (or your ribs slam into it) with incredible force, inflicting 1d6 hp damage. If you die, go to **17.** Otherwise, go to **5.**

44

Ahead of you, through the door, is a short hallway. It could be any other hallway you've seen, except that the ceiling is some 18′ high. Mounted in brackets on the walls are a couple of oil lanterns that seem to be producing equal quantities of light and acrid smoke. As you step inside, you notice a nice touch: The doorknob on the inside of the door you just passed through is made from a human skull.

There's a portal at the south end of the hallway and one in each side wall. Instead of doors, all of the portals are blocked off by floor-to-ceiling curtains.

If you decide to explore to the south, go to **66.** If you want to investigate the portal to the west, go to **105.** If you prefer the portal to the east, go to **26.**

45

"In case of a fall you save me, right?" you ask as you rope up. "And if *you* fall . . . ?"

The guide looks sullen. "Thirty nobles per day," he says firmly. "Twenty's not enough."

You cuff him across the ear, and with very bad grace he starts up the face. When he's 50′ above you, he finds a solid position to belay himself, then beckons you up to join him.

You repeat the procedure three more times: the guide climbing ahead, then finding a solid anchor for the rope while you join him. You're making good progress. "I've climbed tougher counting-house walls," you mutter to yourself.

And of course, that's when your handhold gives way.

You fall perhaps 20′, then the rope stops you with a jerk that almost breaks your back. "Thirty nobles," the guide yells down to you from above. You yell something back. Considering that your life is in his hands, it's lucky he doesn't hear you.

The remainder of that first face is almost an anticlimax. As you lie on a relatively flat spot at the top, you hear a growl.

"What did you say?" you ask the guide.

But he doesn't answer you; he's too busy trying to wedge himself into a gap between two boulders. And you see why.

Take a dog from your worst nightmare. Give it blood-red eyes, slavering jaws, and a terrible disposition.

"Nice doggie," you venture.

With a bone-chilling snarl, the creature leaps.

The range is too close for you to use missile weapons. You must fight the wolf hand to hand.

Wolf: AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 9; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; AL N; MC.

If you defeat the wolf, go to **2.** If you lose, go to **60.**

46

The young giant obviously didn't hear you: he continues reading uninterrupted; from his rapt attention to the book, you figure he probably wouldn't hear a lightning bolt. Now you've got a choice. Do you want to attack the giant while he's otherwise occupied, or do you prefer a "live and let live" attitude? If you decide to attack the giant, go to **94.** If you prefer to sneak out before he notices you, go to **18.**

47

Sometime later, you grow curious about the map. You reach down to open your belt pouch . . . but it's already open. The map, and most of your ready cash, has gone.

Quickly you look around and notice a gnome that you remember seeing earlier. He's just putting something into his pouch: your map! Even though you doubt its value, you suddenly feel very possessive about that map. You paid for it, after all.

It takes a thief to rob a thief. Catlike,

you sidle up beside the gnome. Your fingers brush his belt pouch.

Roll percentile dice. If the result is less than or equal to your pick-pockets percentage, go to **53.** Otherwise, go to **27.**

48

Before you even reach the portal, the smell of cooking tells you what's beyond the curtain. You check to make sure.

It's a kitchen, all right, and there's a giant doing something inexplicable over a cooking pot. You can't be sure—and don't think you really want to be sure—but it looks like he's trying to cook something that doesn't want to stay in the pot.

Roll 1d10. If the result is 1-3, go to **115.** If the result is 4-10, go to **95.**

49

The hairy black spider leaps onto your boot and tries to sink its fangs through the thick leather. You can't very well swing at it with your sword, so you kick it off into the corner.

The thing is persistent. It leaps back onto your boot, whereupon you again kick it off into the corner (ever had that feeling of deja vu?). You cut at it, but the creature leaps aside and your blade strikes sparks from the stone floor. It leaps again, this time as high as your knee. There's no leather there to stop the fangs, and they sink into your flesh. Go to **56.**

50

"Every man for himself," you mutter to yourself as you start to climb.

The steep scree slope is almost as grueling as the sheer face that came before it, but for a different reason. The loose rocks shift easily under your feet, threatening to injure an ankle or send you cascading down the slope in a shower of stone.

Again the weasel leads, and you follow more cautiously. You're almost at the top of the scree slope when it happens. The guide misses a step, or the rocks shift too fast. Before you know what's happening, the weasel rockets past you, screaming, in a torrent of rocks.

There's nothing you can do to save him. Still gaining speed, he slams into the ledge with the dead wolf, then soars off into space. It's a long way down. You shudder and close your eyes for a moment until your breathing is under control. Go to **32.**

51

You peer around the edge of the curtain into a dimly lit room. The walls and floor seem to be black basalt, and there's a large block of gold-veined black stone against the western wall. The whole thing reminds you of a chapel! Luckily, an empty chapel.

As you step into the room, you see something lying on the altar. You approach and find it's an axe formed of black iron. To giants, it would be a small holy symbol; to you, it's a decent-size battle axe. You can't use it to fight with, but it can still be used to cut wood, ropes, etc.

If you decide to take the axe, go to **117.** If you decide to leave it behind, return to **86** and make another choice.

52

On a sudden impulse, you pull out your map again and compare it to the terrain around you. Yes, there's the chasm marked on the parchment, and over there, that has to be the rock spire. With a rush of excitement, you realize that you're almost there, almost at the site of the last bivouac. You scramble over the rocks until you find the flat area and the tiny lake that mark the spot.

But there's nothing there. No sign of human habitation, no rotting tents, no frozen bodies, no Gem of the Giants. Nothing. Go to **79.**

53

The gnome's belt pouch falls open. With practiced skill you extract the parchment and your missing money . . . plus a small surcharge of 1-10 gp to compensate you for your aggravation. Like a shadow you vanish into the crowd. Go to **103.**

54

The giantess must have seen some movement out of the corner of her eye. With frightening speed, she spins and draws her dagger. A nasty smile is on her face as she approaches you, her dagger point weaving an intricate pattern of death.

You must fight this giant hand to hand, rolling for initiative normally.

Female frost giant: AC 4; MV 12; HD 10 + 1; hp 58; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SD impervious to cold; AL CE; MM/44.

If you defeat the giant, go to **9.** If you lose the fight, go to **37.**

55

The young giant is two dozen paces from you, and he still hasn't seen you. You get one free round to attack with missile weapons. The giant is completely surprised and gets no attack this round.

Young frost giant: AC 4; MV 12; HD 5; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-12 with axe; SA hurling rocks for 2-12 hp; SD impervious to cold; AL CE; MM/44.

If you somehow manage to kill him in this free round, go to **87.** Otherwise, the giant closes for hand-to-hand combat; go to **75.**

56

The wound tingles, then burns. Waves of pain spread through your body with each beat of your heart. As blackness engulfs you, you remember some advice your mother gave you: "In matters of Life and Death, avoid Death." Fat lot of good it did you.

57

"Forget it," you tell the beggar. "Good con game, but your presentation lacks a little something." And with that, you swagger off into the crowds.

But, like any good salesman, the beggar doesn't give up easily. You turn at another tug on your sleeve and see him sidling along beside you.

"Honored lord," he wheedles, "how could I, in good conscience, let you walk away from the deal of a lifetime?"

You sigh. You've heard this kind of line before, and you know there's only one way to end it. Your hand flashes to your sword belt . . .

. . . and extracts from your pouch a single coin. You flip it and watch the beggar's eyes sparkle almost as much as the sunlit gold. "One noble, and that's it," you tell him. (Silence is worth it, you figure.)

With surprising speed, the beggar snatches the coin from the air. "Done." He presses the parchment into your hand. With a muttered comment (it sounds like, "Good luck. You'll need it," but you can't be sure) he vanishes into the crowd. Go to **103.**

58

It's tricky, but you manage it. The spring that would drive the needle—which was poisoned, by the way—is removed, and the trap is rendered harmless. Go to **92.**

59

Thinking fast, you pull your dagger and hack at the rope connecting you with the guide. For an instant it holds, then it parts under your razor-edged blade.

A couple of yards in the lead, the guide arcs over the precipice surrounded by a cloud of scree. You have a heartbeat, at most, before you follow him over. Your only hope is to catch onto a projecting rock.

Roll 6d6. If the result is greater than your strength, go to **74.** If the result is equal to or less than your strength, go to **43.**

60

Wolves have no subtlety. Outright attack and damn the consequences is all they know. You're used to fighting more sophisticated opponents, and you realize at once that this puts you at a serious, perhaps lethal, disadvantage.

Somehow you manage to sidestep the wolf's first pounce, but it spins with frightening speed and is at you again. You poise your sword and manage to drive it into the gray-furred breast . . . but too late. The yellowed teeth have already met in your throat. Go to **17.**

61

The bombardment seems to go on forever as shards of rock rip at you. Then nothing. You risk a quick glance over your shoulder.

Both giants are pursuing, their long legs eating up the distance. On flat ground you could probably keep ahead of them, but nothing's flat here. While you have to cut around or scramble over obstacles, they can just step over them. Steadily they're closing the gap. You look around desperately for some shelter.

Up ahead you see it: a field of closely spaced stone pillars, some almost twice your height. Part of your brain concludes that the formations are the result of tiny streams eroding the rock over millennia. But the majority of your mind simply screams, "Shelter!" You sprint in among the rocks, dodging pillars like they were bystanders to a robbery. There's no way the giants can follow you through here.

You run on until your vision tunnels down to the size of a coin held at arm's length. You listen for sounds of giantish pursuit and hear nothing—except the howling of wolves behind you. Two? No, three. Why does it have to be wolves? You're a cat lover.

If you decide to stand and fight, go to **64.** If you think you can outrun the wolves, go to **16.**

62

"What kind of treasure?" you ask.

"I know not, noble lord," the beggar replies, "not exactly. My friend raved as he died, talked of magic, of gold . . . of the Gem of the Giants. I know no more."

If you now decide to purchase the map, go to **106.** If you don't buy the map, go to **57.**

63

You can feel the giant's footsteps as he draws closer and closer and closer. So close that you can see the hair on his knuckles and the wood grain of that huge axe shaft. Is it just your imagination, or can you feel his breath on your face? How can he not see you?

But somehow he doesn't. After what feels like a lifetime, he shrugs. He grumbles something to himself—probably giantish for "that stupid dog" — and wanders away.

You finally extricate yourself from your hiding place and dust yourself off. "Close," you mutter. "Too close." Go to **52.**

64

You turn to face the onrushing wolves. Yes, three of them (why couldn't you be wrong for once?).

You have one round in which to use missile weapons, then the wolves are on you. If you have the glowing sling missile, you have the option to use it at this time. If you decide to do so, add its number to the number of this section and turn to the section number of the sum. Otherwise, after your single round of missile combat, go to **13** to fight the remaining wolves.

Wolves (3): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 13, 10, 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; AL N; MC.

65

It's just a little needle, but the pain courses through you like fire. Your knees unlock, and you pitch to the ground, whimpering. One bit of punishment too much. You can feel yourself slipping into shock. Go to **17.**

66

Another hallway leads southward. To the left and to the right—east and west, to be precise—are curtained portals, with a third portal at the southernmost end of the corridor.

If you decide to investigate the eastern portal, go to **4;** if you choose the western portal, go to **83.** If you prefer the southern portal, go to **86.** If you want to return to the entrance hall, go back to **44.**

67

You don't see or hear the projectile that fells you. One moment you're running, the next the rocky ground comes up and slams you in the face. You struggle for breath, almost crying out with the pain it causes, except that crying out would hurt even more.

"Gem of the Giants, Gem of the Giants," you mumble to yourself. But the mantra fails to bring you any peace as the final darkness closes about you. Ω

68

Using your finest tools, you probe into the heart of the trap's mechanism. If you just move that tiny lever . . .

Sproing! The needle drives into your hand.

Make a saving throw vs. poison. If you make your save, go to **25.** If you fail, go to **56.**

69

Reaching into your pouch for a sling missile, you remember the one you liberated from the young giant, the missile that glowed. Is it magical? As you see the wolves bounding toward you, you figure this might be the time to find out.

You seat the missile in the sling's pouch, swing the weapon around your head, and release. Out of reflex (just in case the bullet is magical) you duck.

And it's a good thing you did. The lead wolf vanishes in a sudden concussion of flame. Objects of a nature you'd rather not dwell on fly through the air above your head.

You'd think that the other wolves might get the hint and go peacefully about their business. But no, these are fanatics—or abysmally stupid. After all, they don't know that you're all out of magical sling missiles. Go to **13** to fight the remaining wolves.

70

You can feel the giant's footsteps as he draws closer and closer and closer. So close that you can see the notches on the shaft of his axe (will you become another one?) and your nose tells you he hasn't bathed in a while. So close that you can see his eyes suddenly widen as he spots you. A nasty smile spreads across his young features, and he hefts the axe ready for a cut at you.

You're too close for missile weapons, and neither of you has surprise. You must fight the giant hand to hand, rolling normally for initiative. Go to **75.**

71

The wolf is awake and snarling, a fast-moving mass of gray fur and slashing teeth. You must fight it hand to hand, rolling normally for initiative. If you slay the wolf, go to **42;** if you lose, go to **3.**

72

The rock door isn't locked, you find. How could it be? There's no keyhole. But it could be trapped.

Roll percentile dice. If the result is equal to or less than your find-traps percentage, go to **88.** If you fail, go to **104.**

73

Your search finds nothing, so you grasp the doorknob and turn it. Cautiously you open the door. Go to **98.**

74

You throw your arms around a boulder as you hurtle past, but your speed is too great. The rock tears from your grasp. You slam into the ledge with the dead wolf, then soar off into space. Go to **100.**

75

Young frost giant: AC 4; MV 12; HD 5; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-12 with axe; SA hurling rocks for 2-12 hp; SD impervious to cold; AL CE; MM/44.

Each round you have the option of turning to flee if you think the combat is going badly. On that round, the giant gets a final swing with a +2 bonus to hit. For this attack, you must calculate your armor class as if you had no dexterity bonus.

If you defeat the giant, go to **36.** If you decide to flee (and survive the giant's parting swing at your back), go to **102.** If you die, go to **110.**

76

Your blow easily severs the wolf's neck. Cleaning off your blade, you search the room.

There's nothing in the kennel of any value, so return to **26** and make another choice.

77

Whatever else might happen to you, you decide you don't want to join that thing in the cookpot. You make a lightning-fast lunge, and your blade bites flesh. The giant hisses in pain and anger, and leaps forward. You backpedal quickly, and your foot comes down on something that rolls. You perform a graceful one-and-a-half-gainer and land on your head.

Done in by a turnip! Considerately, the giant thrusts down with his sword-size knife and rescues you from the humiliation of having to live with that knowledge. Go to **17.**

78

You've taken only a couple of steps when you feel fingers plucking lightly at your belt pouch. You make a fast grab for the pickpocket's wrist, but you miss. Any other thief caught in the act would try to make his getaway in the crowd. Not this one. The gnome who was trying for your pouch draws a short sword and lunges at you. You have no time to use missile weapons and must fight him hand to hand.

Gnome thief: AC 8; MV 12; T5; hp 14; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; AL CE; leather armor.

If you defeat the gnome, go to **91.** If you lose, go to **89.**

79

You taste bitter disappointment as you make a half-hearted search of the area. Again, nothing.

But what's that? If you hadn't stumbled over it, you'd have missed it.

It's an iron spike—almost rusted through—with a few fibers of rope still attached to it. A tent peg, maybe?

Of course! It only makes sense that the giants—who should know their own mountain, after all—would follow the intruders and repossess anything of value. But did they leave anything valuable behind? With sudden enthusiasm, you continue the search.

Almost immediately you stumble over something else, something that once was definitely valuable to somebody. It's a skull, a human skull. Or at least part of a skull. The top was cleanly sliced off just above the ears, like you might take the top off a soft-boiled egg. Just the kind of irritating injury a giant's axe might leave. For a moment, doubts well up within you. Why leave a perfectly comfortable (and marginally safe) city anyway? You force the doubts away. "Gem of the Giants, Gem of the Giants," you intone.

As you criss-cross the area, it occurs to you that something looks funny about that rock face nearby, almost as though there were a door set into it.

It *is* a door, of stone on black iron hinges. A door that rises to a height of about 17'. ("Giants again. Just dandy.") Cautiously you approach it.

Something happens if you have the copper ring. If you don't have the ring, go to **72.**

80

You creep up on the sleeping wolf and poise your weapon for the blow.

You get a free attack on the first round, with a +4 bonus to hit and quadruple damage if the attack succeeds.

Wolf: AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; AL N; MC.

If you slay the wolf in this free round, go to **76.** If the wolf survives, go to **71.**

81

The wolves are all over you. Your world contains nothing but gray-furred bodies, bloodshot eyes, and yellowed fangs. There's no time for technique; you just hack wildly with your sword, sometimes missing, more often making contact. Almost instantly you're drenched with blood—yours or the wolves', you don't know.

A wolf slams into you from the back, driving you to your knees. Before you can react, teeth are at your throat.

Surprisingly, it doesn't hurt. Your last thought is one of gratitude for small favors as you fall headlong into the final blackness. Ω

82

The giants each throw two rocks before you're out of range (treat both giants as 10-HD monsters for hit determination).

The boulders around you give some coverage, raising your effective armor class to −3 for these four attacks (you don't benefit from your dexterity bonus, however).

If you survive the giants' bombardment, go to **84.** If you die, go to **67.**

83

You draw back the curtain—only a finger's breadth—and peek through.

It takes your brain a moment to make sense of the chaos on the other side of the portal. Then you realize you're looking into a storage room of some kind, piled floor to ceiling with junk: ropes, old chairs, scraps of wood, lengths of cloth, etc. Go to **30.**

84

Huge missiles crash into the boulders around you. There are four explosions of razor-sharp fragments, then nothing more. You must be out of range, but you don't slacken your pace, particularly when you hear the howling of wolves behind you. Two? No, three. Why, oh why, couldn't this mountain be zoned "No Pets"?

If you decide to stand and fight, go to **7.** If you think you can outrun the wolves, go to **93.**

85

You consider a missile weapon. But then you look again at that broad expanse of back, just asking to have twelve inches of steel inserted into it. You draw your weapon and poise to leap.

You get a free attack on the first round, with a +4 bonus to hit and quadruple damage if the attack succeeds. In subsequent rounds, the giant fights back with a dagger the size of a broad sword.

Female frost giant: AC 4; MV 12; HD 10+1; hp 58; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SD impervious to cold; AL CE; MM/44.

If you defeat the giant, go to **9.** If you lose, go to **37.**

86

Yet another hallway! Again it leads southward. In the western wall is one curtained portal, and there are two of the same in the eastern wall—one halfway down the corridor, the other at the far south end.

If you decide to investigate the western portal, go to **51.** If you want to look through the nearer of the two eastern portals, go to **48.** If you prefer the farther of the eastern portals, go to **99.** If you want to leave this hallway, return to **66.**

87

The giant twitches once, then is still. Your heart pounds, and your dry mouth still tastes of fear.

You quickly search the body. Apart from a little food (food for frost giants, not for civilized thieves) and a flask of fiery liquor (which is just what you need to ease the thumping of your heart), you find a copper ring (30) and a sling bullet (5) that feels surprisingly heavy. You drop the bullet into a belt pouch for later consideration and notice that it glows faintly.

The copper ring is unadorned and much too big for you. So that you won't lose it, you thread it on a leather thong and tie the thong loosely around your neck. You hesitate over the giant's axe but decide it's just too heavy to do you any good. Go to **52.**

88

No sign of traps. Confidently, you push the door open. Go to **44.**

89

Cautiously you circle, crossing blades but not seriously engaging, watching each other's movements for indications of weakness: a slow riposte, a preference of low line over high line, an opening for a trick disarm. Surely your greater reach should give you a significant advantage. If all else fails, you could use your greater weight to overbear him. But the gnome's terrifying speed seems to overcome his disadvantages.

You sense an opening and lunge. As you do, part of your brain remembers something an old swordmaster once told you: If a bout lasts longer than two heartbeats—from serious engagement to a mortal strike—then the combatants don't know what they're doing. This bout is considerably quicker than that.

With a sense of dull surprise you look down at the gnome's blade, sunk to the hilt in your chest. Go to **17.**

90

The giant's projectiles smash into the boulders around you, raking you with razor-sharp fragments. One, two, three . . . then nothing. You look back. The giant seems to have given up. He's walking determinedly back the way he came.

You feel apprehensive. Who's he going to alert to your presence? There's not much you can do about it. Go to **52.**

91

With speed born of desperation, you manage to evade the gnome's blow. "Shall we dance?" you invite him, a mocking smile on your face as you draw your weapon. It's a trick that's worked for you in the past: sapping an opponent's confidence by ridiculing him. It doesn't work now. The gnome is fast—almost too fast—and his second thrust nearly penetrates your guard. You shift, grimly aware of the people at your back—mobile obstacles that could easily move to hinder you.

Lunge, parry, riposte, and your blade draws first blood; your greater reach puts him at a significant disadvantage, and the gnome knows it. Aggression and speed are his only tactics. With a snarl, he hurls himself at you, blade poised. But his foot slips on some unseen hazard, and his timing is off. The death blow is almost nonchalant, and you've already melted into the crowd as the gnome's body hits the ground.

When you think you've put enough distance between you and the scene of the action, you stop to catch your breath. As you dust yourself off, your hand brushes the pouch on your belt. Curious now, you pull out the map. Go to **103.**

92

You take a deep breath, then open the door.

There it is, resting on a velvet-covered stand! A jewel that big could only be the Gem of the Giants. Even in this dim place, its facets shatter the light and cast dazzling spears of multicolored fire. For a moment you forget to breathe, it's so beautiful. Then you remember where you are, grab the jewel, stuff it deep into your pack, and turn to run.

Out you go, out the way you came in, bursting through the front door into the frosty mountain air. You run until your lungs burn, expecting to hear some sound of pursuit. But (maybe because your ears are filled with the triphammer pounding of your own heart) you hear nothing. The first signal you get of danger is when a hurled rock smashes down next to you.

There are two adult giants behind you (treat them as 10-HD monsters for attack purposes). Each throws two rocks. The boulders around you give some cover, raising your effective armor class to −3 for these four attacks (you don't benefit from your dexterity bonus, however).

If you survive the giants' bombardment, go to **61.** If you die, go to **67.**

93

No joy. The wolves are too fast. You turn and brace for the attack. The wolves are too close for you to use missile weapons. In a moment, they're on you like gray furies.

You must fight the wolves hand to hand, rolling initiative normally.

Wolves (3): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 13, 10, 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; AL N; MC.

If you defeat the wolves, go to **112.** If you lose, go to **81.**

94

You debate using a missile weapon, but then you realize you'd better make your first lick a very good one. Where there's a young giant, there are probably old giants just waiting for junior to make a fuss. Silently you draw your magical sword and spring at the giant's exposed back.

You get a free attack on the first round, with a +4 bonus to hit and quadruple damage if the attack succeeds. In subsequent rounds, the young giant fights back with a belt knife the size of your short sword.

Young frost giant: AC 4; MV 12; HD 5; hp 24; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SD impervious to cold; AL CE; MM/44.

If you defeat the giant, go to **40.** If you lose, go to **14.**

95

The giant turns away from the cooking pot for a moment, reaching for a rope of spices hanging from the ceiling, and he sees you. With a nasty smile and a guttural word—probably meaning "More lunch"—he picks up a kitchen knife the size of a broad sword and comes toward you.

You must fight the giant hand to hand, rolling for initiative normally.

Frost giant: AC 4; MV 12; HD 10+1; hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SD impervious to cold; AL CE; MM/44.

If you defeat the giant, go to **6.** If you lose, go to **77.**

96

You grab the rope and tie it onto your harness. The weasel seems about to say something, but you cut him off: "Twenty nobles and that's it." He shrugs, and the ascent begins.

The steep scree slope is almost as gruseling as the sheer face that came before it, but for a different reason. The loose rocks shift easily under your feet, threatening to injure an ankle or send you cascading down the slope in a shower of stone.

Again the weasel leads, and you follow more cautiously. You're almost at the top of the scree slope when it happens. The guide misses a step, or the rocks shift too fast. Before you know what's happening, the weasel rockets past you, screaming, in a torrent of rocks. You turn and try to dig in to resist the shock that is sure to come when he reaches the end of the rope.

And that's when you realize your mistake. On the loose scree, there's no way you can brace for a good belay. The weasel, still accelerating, reaches the end of the rope, and the impact snatches you off your feet. In an instant you, too, are hurtling downhill. Go to **59.**

97

You pull back a corner of the heavy curtain and peek through the opening. You're looking into a room, obviously a youth's bedroom. You can see a single bed, a wardrobe, and wooden swords on the wall.

The youth, a 10'-tall blond-haired giant, is sitting on a stool with his back to you, reading a book that seems to be mostly pictures. And what pictures! You normally pride yourself on a strong stomach, but then you've never seen pictures this gruesomely vile. Go to **46.**

98

The odor of dog—big dog—washes over you, and you instantly see why. You're looking into a kind of kennel. There are rings on the wall, and lengths of chain that look as though they should hook up to collars.

But what really catches your eye is the huge beast curled up in the middle of the floor. It's a wolf, and a big one at that. And it's asleep—at least, you think it's asleep.

If you decide to attack the wolf while it's asleep, go to **80;** if you decide to let sleeping dogs lie, return to **26** and make another choice.

99

Beyond the curtain is a small alcove or anteroom. Facing you is a heavy oak door, its handle about level with your head.

If you want to open the door, go to **28.**

If you decide to ignore the door, go back to **86** and make another choice.

100

It's a long way down. As you fall, you mutter, "This just isn't my daaaay . . ." Ω

101

The wolf is far enough away that you get one round to attack with missile weapons. After that, the wolf (provoked by your attack) has closed to hand-to-hand range.

Wolf: AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 14; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; AL N; MC.

If you defeat the wolf, rest for a few minutes to regain your nerves; then go to **52.** If you lose the fight, go to **33.**

102

You run, but the giant doesn't pursue. Instead, a quick glance over your shoulder shows he's picked up a rock the size of your head.

The giant throws three rocks before you're out of range. The boulders around you give you some coverage, raising your effective armor class to −3 for these three attacks. You don't benefit from your dexterity bonus, however.

If you survive the giant's bombardment, go to **90.** If you die, go to **67.**

103

"Might as well see what I've got here," you mutter. Ducking into the privacy of an alley, you unroll the parchment and examine it. The map shows some sort of mountain with symbols on it. You turn over the parchment and start reading.

Excitement grabs your heart and squeezes. White Fang! You remember now. White Fang is the tallest mountain in the nearby Ironcrag Range. Its snow-clad peak is supposed to be home to frost giants, but that's just an old wives' tale. Isn't it?

You read on. The writing is a journal, as you suspected, written by a member of an expedition up White Fang. Mighty warriors all, they dared to challenge the frost giants and wrest from them their treasure. According to the journal, they almost succeeded. They entered the giants' settlement, killed many of their animal guardians, and made their escape with sacks full of treasure, including something called the Gem of the Giants.

Their greed was their undoing, it seems. Overladen with loot, the adventurers had a gruesome accident on the descent, when a rope parted under the heavy load. Three of the party died in the fall, another two were badly injured. Only one—the writer of the journal—was miraculously unhurt. The injured climbers couldn't go on, so they made a final bivouac on the slopes of White Fang. The uninjured climber was to complete the descent and bring rescue. Before he'd made it to the lowlands, however, a storm moved in and he became lost in the snow. Starving, almost dead from exposure, and crippled by frostbite, he found his way to safety two days later. By that time, he knew, his injured friends must be dead—thanks to exposure or to the giants. His frostbite (and subsequent demoralizing amputations) ended his adventuring career, and he never returned to White Fang.

The map you hold in your hand shows the location of that final bivouac, and maybe the resting place of the Gem of the Giants. You've never climbed anything more than a countinghouse wall, but nothing—not even a mountain—will stand between you and a good score.

You remember a nearby shop that caters to wilderness adventurers. Sure enough, they sell the gear necessary to climb a mountain. As you examine the bewildering selection of ropes, spikes, pitons, boots, and things you can't even put a name to, you hear a wheedling voice in your ear.

"Planning a climb, my lord?" You turn to face a small, weasel-faced man. With some irritation, you nod.

"And the mountain you intend to climb . . . ?"

You've practiced your cold stare for just such occasions as this. But the weasel doesn't seem to take the hint. "Each mountain is dangerous in her own way," he goes on. "Show her the respect she deserves, or she'll kill you. Have you ever climbed before?"

"Well, no," you admit.

"Then you need a guide," the weasel says firmly. "The best guide. Me. For only thirty nobles per day, I'll see you to the top of any mountain there is. What do you say, my lord?"

If you decide to hire the guide, go to **113.** If you prefer to make the climb alone, go to **121.**

104

You don't find anything, but for one of the first times in a career marked by vast self-confidence, you doubt your conclusions. Taking a deep breath (nothing ventured, nothing gained) you push the door open.

Nothing stabs you, shocks you, or poisons you. (It's your lucky day, isn't it?) Go to **44.**

105

Carefully you push aside the curtain and look through the gap. Another hallway leads to the west. At the far end is a curtain-shrouded portal, and yet another in the hallway's southern wall. Apart from two more smoky lanterns, whose entire purpose seems to be to make your eyes water, the corridor is empty.

If you want to investigate the western portal, go to **97;** if you want to go through the southern portal, go to **119.** To go back to the entrance hallway, return to **44** and make another choice.

106

In a fit of uncharacteristic generosity, you toss the beggar five gold coins (you'd stolen them anyway) and take the map. You know it's a fake (you've pulled similar scams yourself), but the poor beggar obviously needed the money.

If you continue wandering through the market, go to **1.** If instead you stop to examine your purchase, go to **103.**

107

The door is closed. You bend to the latch mechanism for a closer look.

What was that? Movement, somewhere down the hallway behind you? Or was it just your nerves?

If you decide to take the time to search for traps, go to **24.** If you decide not to take the time, go to **111.**

108

Oh-ho! You spot a spring-loaded needle trap, probably poisoned. You dry your hands on your breeches and attempt to disarm it.

Roll percentile dice. If the result is equal to or less than your remove-traps percentage, go to **58.** If the roll is greater, go to **68.**

109

As you approach, you hear a "click" that seems to come from within the door itself. Slowly the door swings open, but nothing comes out.

When you finally emerge from the crevice into which you flung yourself, you perform a quick experiment. If you

move a couple of paces away from the door, it swings shut. If you approach again, it opens once more.

"Convenient," you mutter to yourself. But convenient for whom? you can't help but wonder. Go to **44.**

110

It isn't fair, you think. You've got a short sword, and he's got a mucking great axe with a shaft almost as tall as you are. It just isn't fair.

You duck and bob and weave, managing to avoid by a hairsbreadth that axe of cold gray death. All the while you look for an opening, maybe a chance to slip inside the arc of his swing and feed him some steel.

The giant takes a particularly violent swing at your head, which you duck, and it puts him off balance. You move in . . . and get knocked off your feet by a backhand swing that seems to come from nowhere. Your chest feels numb, nerveless. You look down and wince. Red just isn't your color. Go to **17.**

111

You're pretty sure there's no trap there, so you grab the doorknob and turn it. Nothing nasty happens; you were right again. (You breathe a sigh of relief.) Cautiously you open the door. Go to **98.**

112

Like a scene from a nightmare, everything is glaring red eyes and slashing teeth. You swing your blade until your arms feel like they'll pull from their sockets.

But then you realize there's nothing left for you to strike at. The huge beasts all lie dead around you.

The descent is relatively uneventful: just two near-falls and a small avalanche. Nothing to be concerned about. As you drag your aching body back to the base camp, you're a little disappointed. No Gem of the Giants. But you realize you have come away with two prizes of value: a great story to tell around the tavern fire . . . and your life.

Two out of three isn't bad. Ω

113

"Twenty nobles," you reply out of instinct.

The weasel isn't happy, but he finally agrees. With his help, you're soon equipped and ready to start.

"And our destination . . . ?" the weasel asks.

"White Fang."

For the first time since you met him, the weasel is silent.

The ride to the foot of the mountain takes several days. As you approach the Ironcrag Range, White Fang seems to rise out of the plain like a sentinel. The other peaks in the range are high, but White Fang towers high above them, seeming to claw the clouds from the sky. Details of the daunting slopes become visible, and your weasel-like guide seems to take gruesome pleasure in pointing out some of the better-known features (Neesom's Plunge, Dara's Chimney, etc.), most of them named after climbers who lost their lives on them. Apprehension builds within you, but you banish it with a mantra that you guess you'll be using a lot: "Gem of the Giants. Gem of the Giants. Gem of the Giants."

The horses can take you only so far. Then it's a rugged hike carrying what feels like a ridiculous amount of equipment. Finally, you stand at the foot of the first ascent—Barek's Folly—a sheer rock face several hundred feet high. You look at it skeptically.

"Couldn't we start with something more difficult?" you ask your guide.

But he doesn't seem to recognize sarcasm. "More difficult higher up," he states. He passes the end of a rope to you and instructs, "Tie this around your waist in case of a fall."

If you decide to rope up with the guide, go to **45.** If you choose to climb solo, go to **8.**

114

You take the candlestick (10). It's too big to go in your backpack, so you'll have to carry it in your left hand (inconvenient, but in a pinch it might do as a second weapon).

Now go back to **66** and make another choice.

115

The giant has his back to the doorway and doesn't seem to have noticed you, so you've got a choice: attack from the rear or skulk off.

If you decide to attack the giant, go to **34.** If you'd rather retreat, go to **38.**

116

You search the room quickly, constantly aware that a giant could happen by to tidy up, but you find nothing.

But wait! What's that? So high up the wall that you have to stand on tip-toe, you find a small concealed compartment. With trembling fingers, you open the door and reach in. Have you found the Gem of the Giants at last?

No. There's gold inside (a heavy bracelet, perhaps forgotten by a previous occupant of the room) but no jewel. You're a little disappointed, although you have no real reason. The bracelet is probably worth almost 1,000 gold nobles. You pocket the loot and shut the compartment.

Go back to **119** and make another choice.

117

You pick up the black axe and heft it. Hmm, nicely balanced. You can't fight with it, but it can cut ropes. You stuff it safely into your pack.

Was that a noise behind you? You spin and reach for your sword . . . but somehow it's the axe that's in your hand. For a moment you don't realize what's happened; you're too concerned about the noise. But then—after you've decided that there was no noise, just your nerves—you think it through. You know you went for your sword; you also know you ended up with the axe in your hand. You have an awful suspicion about what's going on.

In fact, the night-black weapon is a *cursed battle axe −1.* In every combat for the rest of the adventure, the only weapon you can use is this axe (even though thieves cannot normally use axes). Even if the text of the adventure gives you the option of missile combat, the axe prevents you from taking it. Instead, as soon as you have the option of entering combat, the axe *teleports* into your hand and stays welded to your palm until the combat is ended. With the axe, your base THAC0 becomes 20 (including nonproficiency penalty). The axe does 1-8 hp damage to any opponent, regardless of size.

Now slouch back—cursing—to **86** and make another choice.

118

The spider sinks its ugly fangs into the unprotected back of your left hand.

Make a saving throw vs. poison, with a +2 bonus. If you make your save, go to **35.** If you fail, go to **56.**

119

It's another hallway (don't these giants have anything better to do than build hallways?), this time leading southward.

Part way along there's a curtain-covered portal in the western wall; closer to the far end there's another draped portal, again in the west wall.

If you want to investigate the first western portal, go to **20;** if you prefer to investigate the second portal, go to **15.** If you decide to give this whole hallway a miss, return to **105** and make another choice.

120

You draw your weapon and circle cautiously, gauging your foe's abilities from his movements.

He's good. Very good. Every motion is precise, controlled, and his eyes are locked on yours, telegraphing nothing.

Lunge, parry, riposte, parry, disengage. The phrase is so fluid it must look choreographed to the bystanders. But you know it's in deadly earnest.

This guy's too good for comfort. You can probably take him, but you don't like anything less than a sure thing (you have only one skin, and you'd like to keep it intact, thank you very much). Anyway, you're a thief. Who said you had to fight fair?

For an instant you glance away from the gnome's eyes, to a point over his left shoulder. "No!" you yell to a nonexistent accomplice. "He's mine!"

You can tell from the gnome's eyes that he's bought it. He's too good to look over his shoulder, but his concentration is broken. And while it is, you break it some more by driving your blade into his chest.

Almost before the gnome hits the ground, you've extracted the parchment from his pouch. It's yours anyway, you tell yourself, and you paid good money for it. Go to **103.**

121

"I'm allergic to rodents," you tell the would-be guide, and he stalks off in a huff.

With the help of the store's proprietor, who stops laughing at you only when you toy meaningfully with your short sword, you're soon equipped and ready to start for the mountain.

During the four-day ride, the Ironcrag Range—and White Fang in particular—seems to rise out of the plain before you. Usually, you're unaffected by such fancies, but as you draw nearer, you start to feel the mountain range almost as an oppressive weight looming above you. Normally, you enjoy solitude, but now you wish you had someone to talk to.

Apprehension builds within you, but you banish it with a mantra that you guess you'll be using a lot: "Gem of the Giants. Gem of the Giants. Gem of the Giants."

Your horse can take you only so far. Then it's a rugged hike carrying what feels like entirely too much gear. Finally, you stand at the foot of the first ascent, a sheer face several hundred feet high. With a sigh, you take to the rock.

The first hundred feet aren't so bad. Foot- and handholds are plentiful, and the chill air is bracing. You make good progress. "No tougher than a palace wall," you mutter to yourself.

And of course, that's when your handhold gives way. Go to **100.**

122

The wolves are all around you and all over you. Teeth tear at your clothing and your flesh, and their red eyes are like a nightmare from which you can't awaken. You swing your blade like a madman, screaming your pain and defiance.

And then everything is still. The last of the gray-furred monsters lies motionless at your feet. Throwing your normal reserve to the wind, you howl at the skies in victory.

Even the descent, harrowing and almost lethal, isn't enough to dampen your mood. As you drag your aching body back to the base camp, you're exultant. The Gem of the Giants is heavy in your backpack, and your wounds are nothing that time—and a fortnight of debauchery in the city—won't cure.

You pull the Gem of the Giants out and watch it sparkle in the firelight. Not bad for a couple of days' work.

Gods, you love your job! Ω

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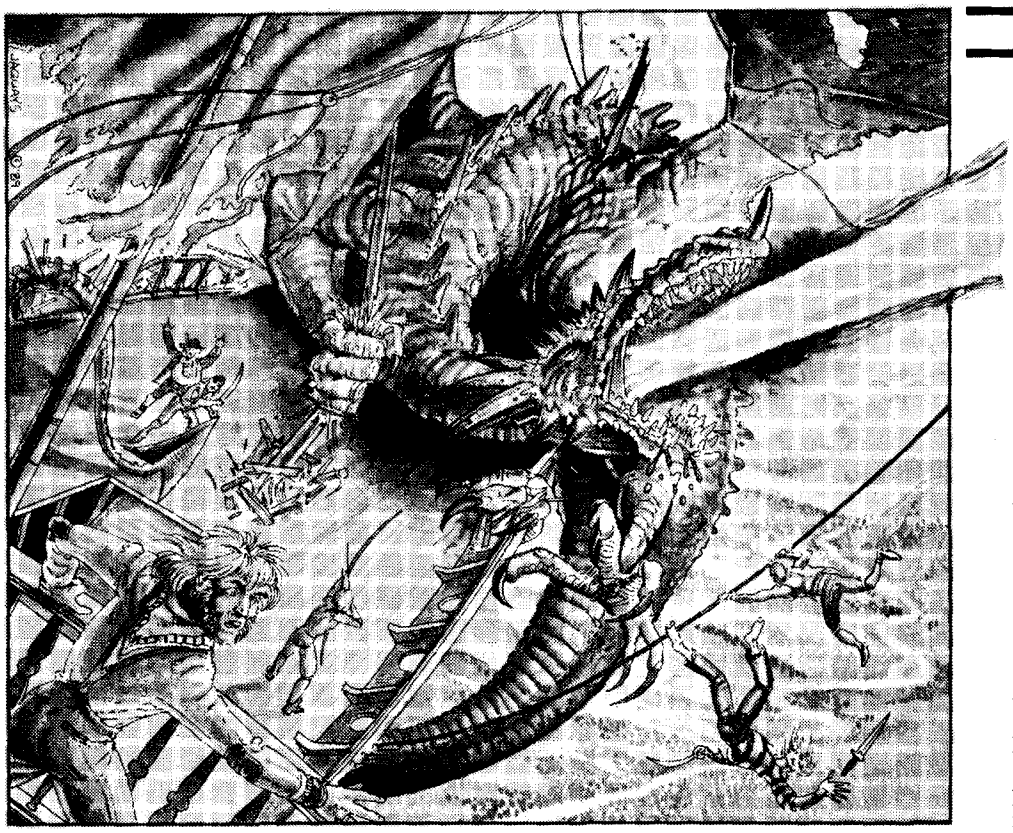


PRIDE OF THE SKY

BY RANDY MAXWELL

Pride goeth before a long, long fall.

Artwork by Paul Jaquays

Randy Maxwell reports that his local geography is largely responsible for this module. "The semi-arid desert of West Texas is amazingly like the descriptions of the Broken Lands in the D&D® Known World, particularly the description of South Gnollistan in GAZ 10 The Orcs of Thar. *When looking out over such desolation, it is easy to imagine manscorpion temples, orc tribes, and the sun-bleached bones of mammoth creatures awaiting discovery."*

"Pride of the Sky" is a D&D module for 4-6 characters of 8th-12th level (about 50 total levels). A balanced party containing at least one cleric is recommended. The party should take potions of *antidote, bug repellent,* and *healing,* or other types of magical items (such as a *staff of healing)* that either neutralize poison or induce healing.

While this module is for Expert-level play, some monsters, magical items, and spells have been taken from the Companion Set, and the DM should be familiar with the Companion rules before playing this module.

The adventure takes place in the Broken Lands of the D&D Known World. The Gazetteer GAZ10 *The Orcs of Thar* can be used with this adventure to add detail, description, and nuance that are otherwise unavailable to the DM without a great deal of work. The module can, with a little work, be relocated to a similar geographical location in the DM's own campaign world.

The scenario revolves around the crash of a magical airship named the *Pride of the Sky.* Magical airships are built in much the same fashion as normal seagoing ships. The larger airships, like the *Pride of the Sky,* look almost exactly like full-rigged sailing ships, but the keel of an airship is much flatter than that of a seagoing vessel. This type of construction eliminates the need for any type of special landing facilities. The airships can use normal freshwater and saltwater ports, even if they are frozen over, and can also land on level dry land. While such ships are rare and not a common sight, the PCs should at least have seen paintings and drawings of such airships hanging in taverns and inns throughout the Known World.

Adventure Background

Of the tales of unclaimed wealth and legends of lost treasure, the story of the

Pride of the Sky ranks among the best known. It is told and sung by many entertainers and tale-tellers throughout the Known World, and it is known to virtually everyone in the Republic of Darokin and the Principalities of Glantri.

The *Pride of the Sky* was a magical airship that crashed in the Broken Lands. The airship, along with her sister ship (the *Wind Chaser)* was transporting the treasure hoard of a powerful wizard from the city of Minrothad to Glantri City. Over the Broken Lands, the *Pride of the Sky* was attacked by a huge red dragon. In the fierce air battle that followed, machine and monster became entangled and crashed in flames.

The *Wind Chaser* fled the area and reported the crash upon reaching Glantri City. The captain of the *Wind Chaser* witnessed the final moments of the battle between the dragon and the *Pride of the Sky,* and recorded the crash in the ship's log. He also had a map made of the crash location. Daedalus Magus, the wizard whose treasure was aboard the *Pride,* refused to let the log and map be made public while he lived. He assumed that one day he would mount an expedition to the crash site and recover the hoard. However, the magic-user died before any such expedition could be launched. After his death, the log and map disappeared and were assumed to have been stolen.

For the Dungeon Master

The log and map were indeed stolen. In the 100 years since the death of Daedalus Magus, they have changed hands many times, being stolen or sold again and again. The log and map have passed through many cities and nations since they were made. One of the PCs inherits the log and map in the following manner.

A halfling named Mortimer Smalls arranges a meeting with the PC (the DM can choose one of the PCs at random or choose a PC with an extensive family background). Mortimer claims he has business to conduct with the PC.

Mortimer Smalls: AC 9; H1; hp 5; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save H1; ML 7; AL L; BD/31; dagger, no armor.

Mortimer identifies himself as the executor of the will of one Gertrude Toklas. He says that the PC's "Aunt Gertie" has recently died of natural causes and has left a sealed scroll tube to her nephew (or niece, as the case may be). The PC need not remember Aunt Gertie, as he may not have seen her since he was a small child. In addition, the aunt need not be a blood relative but can be a friend of the family who was called an aunt.

Mortimer is fussy and officious. He asks for proof of the PC's identity and proper receipts for the scroll tube he delivers. The halfling explains that the sealed scroll tube is the only item that Aunt Gertie bequeathed to the PC and, if asked, shows the PC a copy of Aunt Gertie's will. The document clearly states that her house and the bulk of her estate have been left to her cats, with all her possessions and money to be used solely for their feeding and care. Mortimer has no idea what the tube contains. Being scrupulously honest about such things, he has never unsealed the scroll tube to see what might be inside.

The DM does not have to use Aunt Gertie or any family member as the person leaving the scroll tube to the PC. However, even PCs who do not have any living relatives have a past history. The DM may draw forth any old friend, teacher, pupil, etc. from that past to replace Aunt Gertie.

The scroll tube is not trapped, though the PCs, being naturally suspicious, may use such spells as *detect magic* or *find traps* to assure themselves of this fact. The tube contains only a note from Aunt Gertie, the log descriptions of the crash, and the map to the crash site. The DM should, at this time, give the PC a copy of Aunt Gertie's note, the log, and the map.

The note states:

"Dear Nephew: I have no way of ensuring the accuracy of this log or map. I acquired them from a friend who bequeathed them to me as I now bequeath them to you. He came by the map and log in the desert sands of Ylaruam, but he also acquired an incurable wasting illness while in that desert and was, therefore, never able to use them. At the time I received these items I was very old, and my health and age made an expedition to prove their authenticity out of the question. I believe they are genuine, for the man who left them to me was a serious adventurer and not one to bother with false maps or to play at trifles.

"I leave these items to you in good faith, placing no restrictions on what you do with them. You may sell the map and log or attempt to find the treasure yourself. I realize the person I leave these items to is no longer the fearless child who listened to my tales of dragons and heroes years ago. So, dear boy, in remembrance of those long-gone days, I leave you a chance to live your own tale of dragons and heroes."

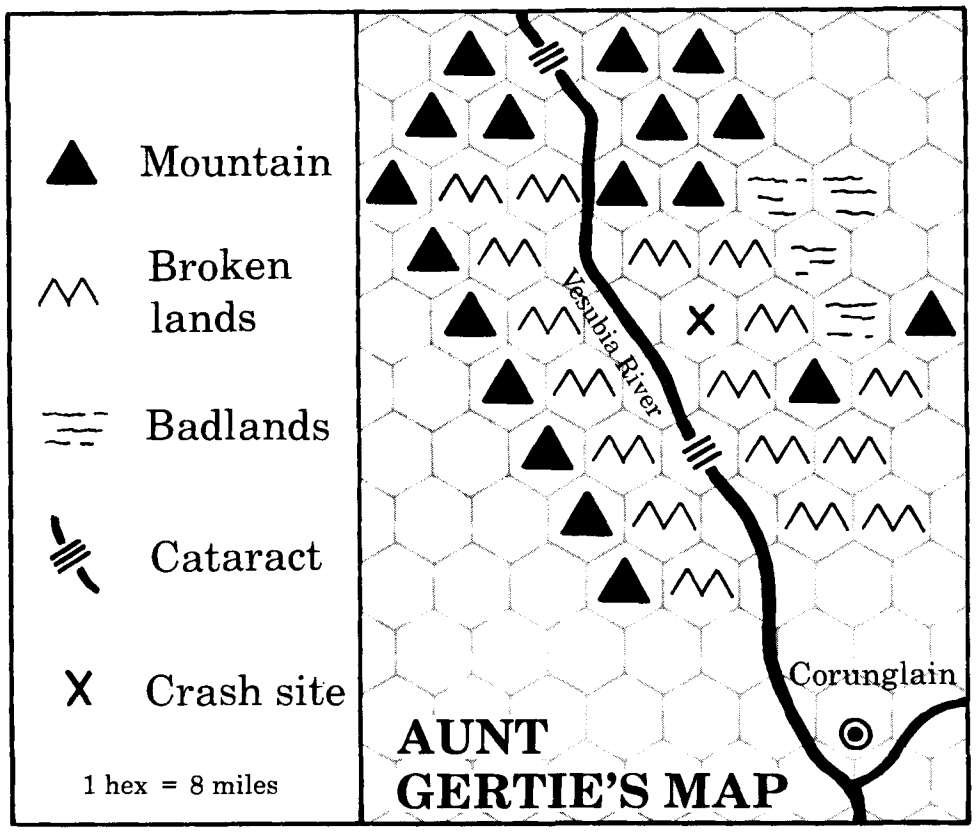
It is impossible and pointless to trace the former owners of the map and log. Whether because the owner died (either while attempting to recover the treasure or before an expedition could be mounted), or because the map and log were stolen, no one has ever succeeded in finding the treasure—or returning with it.

Inside Gertie's note is another roll of parchment, brown with age and stained with water (and something in the corner that looks suspiciously like blood). The ink has faded a good deal, but the writing is still quite legible. The parchment is headed "Captain's Log" and reads:

"Entry for the 13th day of Klarmont in the 899th year After Crowning: The day started with fair weather and a fine breeze at our backs. We were 40 miles north of Corunglain, following the river Vesubia, and were nigh over the first cataracts of the river when a dragon came. Blood red it was, and it bore arrow straight and hard upon the *Pride of the Sky.* I saw the first swoop that took the poor lad from the crow's nest and splintered the yard of the main topgallant sail.

"I didn't see what happened next, for I took a line hard to starboard, away from the fight, and dove like a falcon for the hills below so the dragon couldn't get under us. I thought the *Pride* would do the same, but she wasn't so lucky. When I got my own ship squared and ready, I looked up and saw the *Pride* was bad hurt. She floundered with her mainsail gone, foremast shattered, and all sails on the mizzen naught but flying rags. It was a hard thing to watch. There was one small band of elven lads giving as good as they got, but they just couldn't maneuver.

"Then a strange thing happened. The dragon dove out of the sun directly on the *Pride.* Whether it thought the ship would move out of its way or was trying to splinter the ship asunder with one mighty blow, I just don't know. The dragon didn't pull up, and the ship was just too crippled to get out of the way. The dragon rammed chest first into the



deck, skewering itself on the broken foremast and letting out such a scream of rage, hate, and pain that my ears ring yet. It lashed and squirmed and belched fire until the *Pride* near broke in two and was alight from stem to stern. Then all was quiet and still.

"As I watched, the *Pride of the Sky* started falling. At first she sank slow and gentle, like a leaf on an autumn breeze. Then she picked up speed and fell like a shooting star into the heart of the hills. The sound of her hitting the ground was like a thunderclap."

Inside the old parchment is a thick piece of vellum, yellowed with age like the page from the ship's log, but in better condition and less stained. It is the final piece of the puzzle—the map to the crash site of the *Pride of the Sky.*

Each PC will have heard 1-4 rumors about the crashed airship. Roll 1d10 for each PC to determine which rumors the individual has heard over the years concerning the *Pride of the Sky*, using the section that follows. Duplicate rumors are possible. These rumors come from tavern talk and tale-tellers, who often spice up the well-known story of the crash with their own personal conjectures and fabrications. All the rumors are false except #8, which is not completely true; only a few of the elven crewmen now guard the treasure in Undead form. The PCs have no way of knowing whether the rumors are true or false except by investigating the crash site.

1. The dragon that attacked the airship was not killed and still guards the wreck and treasure hoard.

2. There are over 100,000 gp worth of gems, jewelry, and precious metals just waiting to be claimed by anyone who finds the wreck.

3. The Immortals have claimed the crash site, and it can no longer be found.

4. The *Pride of the Sky* never really crashed. It was all just a clever hoax to steal the treasure.

5. The orcs living in the Broken Lands found the crash site and looted the wreck long ago.

6. The airship either fell into the Vesubia River or on the bank of the river, and it has long since been washed away in floods.

7. The *Pride of the Sky* did not carry a great deal of gold, gems, or jewelry, but was loaded with scrolls, potions, rare books, and expensive cloth, all of which were probably destroyed in the crash.

8. The airship crew and the dragon guard the crash site in terrible Undead forms.

9. The airship exploded before it hit the ground, scattering the treasure over a wide area.

10. There was no treasure aboard the *Pride of the Sky.* The *Pride* came along only to protect the other airship.

If the PC wishes to sell the map and the log, he will get a maximum of 1d4 × 10 gp for them. Without some sort of proof of authenticity, most buyers will be extremely skeptical and unwilling to pay a large amount.

Those DMs not using GAZ10 *The Orcs of Thar* can orient the log and Player's Map with Map #2, "The Lands and Environs of the D&D Wilderness," on page 33 of the *Expert Rulebook.* The DM need only find find Corunglain in the Republic of Darokin (it is assumed that the PCs will begin their search here because of the log entry). The rivers forking at Corunglain are the Streel and the Vesubia. The Streel flows down from the Ethengar Khanate, while the Vesubia begins its travels in the Principalities of Glantri.

Journeying through the Broken Lands should not be difficult for the party, as lesser creatures will avoid any confrontation with such a powerful party. For wilderness encounters, use the Chance of Encounter table on page 30 of the *Expert Rulebook,* treating the terrain as barren lands. If an encounter is called for, consult the Wilderness Encounters table in this adventure.

If the PCs fly to the location using aerial mounts, flying carpets, etc., use the Chance of Encounter table but treat the terrain as aerial. If an encounter is indicated, consult the Flyers table on page 35 of the *Expert Rulebook.*

It is impossible to take boats up the Vesubia due to the many dangerous cataracts (only the very largest are marked on the Player's Map).

Once the PCs are within four miles of the crash site, the DM should roll 1d6 every four hours. During daylight hours, a roll of 1-3 means that the party has encountered a manscorpion patrol from the temple at the crash site. Night encounters happen only on a roll of 1-2. The DM should note that the patrol's morale is 12, and the manscorpions will fight to the death. The patrol will not

send messengers back to warn the temple. Manscorpion logic dictates that if a patrol is victorious, no warning is necessary. And if a patrol fails to return, that is warning enough. If a patrol returns and finds the temple has been attacked, it will stalk the attackers throughout the temple.

If any PCs surrender to or are captured by the patrol, they are taken to the temple for interrogation and certain death. Captured clerics suffer immediate ritual sacrifice on the altar, while all others are allowed to live until fresh meat is needed. Those unfortunate enough to be allowed to live are often used by the manscorpions for training. Fighters, thieves, and even magic-users are forced to fight to the death, defending themselves with blunt swords and other ineffective weapons while the manscorpions launch single and multiple attacks against them to hone the monsters' skill and timing in attacks. Nonelven demi-humans (especially halflings) are allowed to escape so that the manscorpions can practice tracking and stalking. The manscorpions also take scalps. They inflict this indignity on dead and dying captives as well as those they kill in battle. Elven captives are taken to area 19.

The Temple of Skorpios

When the *Pride of the Sky* crashed, the dragon was still impaled upon the foremast but was quite dead before the ship hit the ground. The airship fell into a deep, narrow ravine between two hills. The fiery impact caused a great avalanche of stones, completely covering the crash site. This is why the ship cannot be found by searching from aerial mounts, flying carpets, etc. The tremendous heat generated by the dragon and the burning ship was trapped under the fallen rock, forming a kind of kiln. This fused the loose rock and boulders together, actually melting some stones nearest the heat. All scrolls, books, and wooden treasures were completely incinerated in the heat, but something very strange happened to the coins and jewelry. Melted by the heat, they formed pools of molten silver and gold. In many places, the two ran together, merging to form exotic patterns. These streams of precious metal are dotted by the many gems and jewels that survived the inferno.

When the airship crashed, it acted as a shock absorber for the dragon. Upon impact, the dragon smashed through the upper decks of the ship instead of crunching directly down upon the stony hills. The dragon's bones—indeed, its entire skeleton—survived virtually intact, while the flesh has long since withered away.

The orcs and other creatures of the Broken Lands avoid the area of the crash site because they believe the huge fireball they saw had something to do with the Shining One, a kobold Immortal who blinds his foes with shining armor and tricks them into deadly traps. Orcs and other humanoid tribes simply regard the area as *unus malus-mater locus* ("a place where it is unsafe to go.")

Some 40 years ago, a tribe of manscorpions found the crash site quite by accident while taking shelter from a storm. They entered what they thought was a small cave but soon discovered they were inside a huge skull. With their curiosity piqued, the manscorpions widened a narrow passage directly behind the skull (an opening where the flesh of the dragon's neck had rotted away) and set about exploring the dragon's skeleton.

When they discovered the great golden floor with its manscorpion design (see area 9), the creatures decided that the place should be made into a temple. They delved the temple into and around the dragon's bones and the melted treasure of the wrecked airship, excavating new chambers in the rock and expanding the natural cavities left by the decomposing dragon. Many rooms in the temple have solid gold and silver floors, with melted or fused rock walls and ceilings. Some rooms are pillared, floored, or roofed with dragon bones.

The temple is dedicated to Skorpios, the Immortal venerated by the manscorpions. It is a weird, exotic place. The

Wilderness Encounters

The Broken Lands are extremely barren but still maintain a large number of inhabitants. Adventuring parties in the Broken Lands are often considered a convenient meal by those residing in the desolate countryside. Because this is their country, the orcs, kobolds, goblins, etc. fight with maximum morale against humans and demi-humans. If an encounter is called for, consult the list below using the sum of 1d8 + 1d12. The DM may change or expand the list to include monsters other than the ones listed. However, the DM should keep in mind that the Broken Lands are the home of the Ten Tribes of Thar, the nation of orcs. Therefore, orcs and their many cousins are the primary wandering monsters here.

A DM using GAZ10 *The Orcs of Thar* may wish to increase or decrease the probability of encountering certain monsters, depending on the PCs' location in the Broken Lands. The DM may also wish to increase or decrease the number of creatures encountered, depending on the strength of the adventuring party. Lastly, wilderness encounters should be discontinued once the PCs are within four miles of the crash site.

2-3 **Hobgoblins** (35): AC 6; HD 1 + 1; hp 6 each; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F1; ML 10; AL C; BD/31; short sword, spear.

4-5 **Gnolls** (24): AC 5; HD 2; hp 11 (×9), 8 (×15); MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +1; Save F2; ML 8; AL C; BD/30; sword, hand axe.

6-7 **Kobolds** (70): AC 7; HD ½; hp 4 (×20), 3 (×30), 2 (×20); MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type −1; Save Normal Man; ML 8; AL C; BD/32; club, dagger.

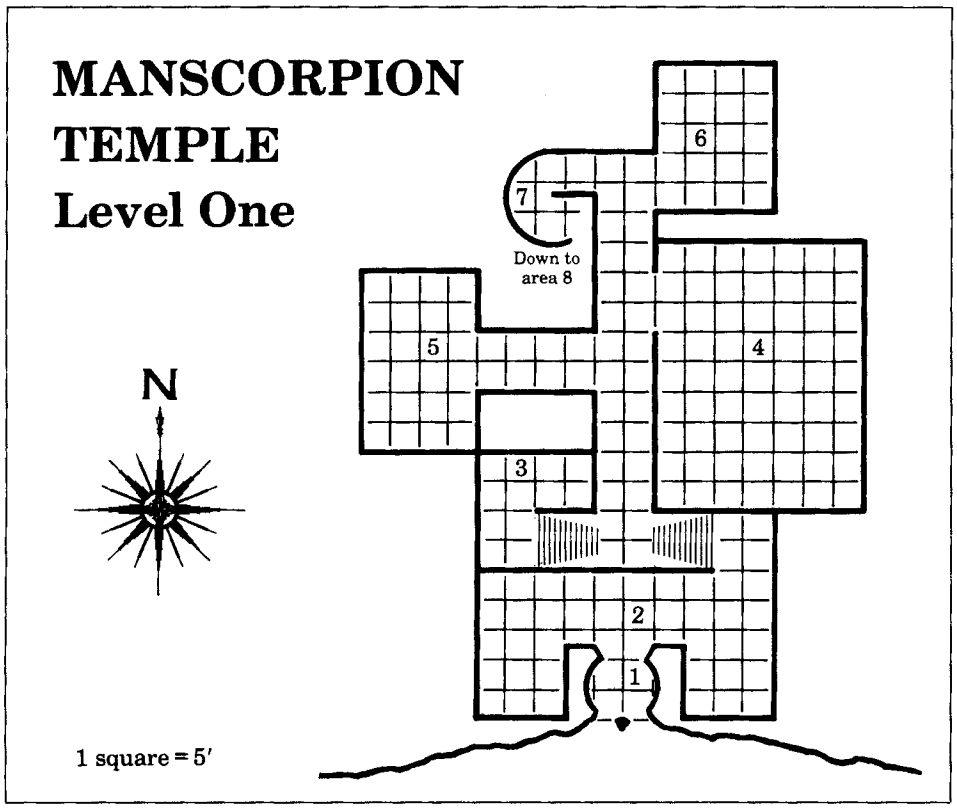
8-9 **Bugbears** (14): AC 5; HD 3 + 1; hp 17 (×5), 14 (×9); MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +1; Save F3; ML 9; AL C; BD/27; battle axe.

10-14 **Red Orcs** (45): AC 6; HD 1; hp 5 (×30), 4 (×15); MV 120'(40'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F1; ML 8; AL C; BD/35; short sword, dagger.

15-16 **Trolls** (8): AC 4; HD 6 + 3; hp 30 (×3), 25 (×5); MV 120'(40'); #AT 3 (2 claws/1 bite); Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-10; Save F6; ML 10; AL C; ER/56.

17-18 **Ogres** (12): AC 5; HD 4 + 1; hp 20 (×6), 16 (×6); MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +2; Save F4; ML 10; AL C; BD/35; huge club (does 1-10 hp damage, excluding the +2 strength bonus).

19-20 **Goblins** (55): AC 6; HD 1 − 1; hp 4 each; MV 90' (30'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save Normal Man; ML 9; AL C; BD/31; club.



melted treasure, fused rock, and dragon's bones give the temple an otherworldly aspect. When describing the Temple of Skorpios, the DM should always convey the surreal nature of the place.

Treasure

The gold-piece value for much of the treasure in the temple may seem low, considering that an entire floor may be made of gold and silver. Gold-piece values for melted treasure is not figured on the basis of how much gold and silver will actually be recovered if it is broken up and resmelted. The resmelting process is absolutely necessary to remove impurities (bits of rock, charcoal, and metallic junk from the wreck of the airship, etc.) and separate the gold from the silver.

Resmelting is an expensive process, and its cost greatly reduces the value of the treasure. In addition, while many gems can be removed intact from the melted metals, many jewels will be scarred when removed and will lose some of their value. So even though about 150,000 gp worth of treasure was melted and turned into a very expensive floor, only about 50,000 gp (one-third the original amount) can be recovered as actual profit if the floor is broken up and resmelted.

If the PCs wish to recover and sell the bones of the dragon, the DM should point out that dragon bones are not really that rare a commodity. Also, the cost of recovering the skeleton from the rubble of the crash site and transporting it to a location where it might be sold is nearly twice its sale value (so PCs can only lose money on the deal). If the PCs wish to recover a rib, thigh bone, or the dragons' skull as a conversation piece or decoration for a castle or keep, they may do so, but such bones have no experience-point or gold-piece sale value.

Creatures

The temple contains only three types of creatures: manscorpions (in one form or another), who found and claimed the crash site; giant scorpions, who are on a very friendly basis with the manscorpions and are used as guards and beasts of burden; and wyrds, evil spirits who were attracted by the death throes of the shipboard elves and inhabited the remains of elven crewmembers who died in the crash. These elven warriors used potions of *fire resistance,* taken from a large store of potions that was part of the cargo, to save themselves from the fire and heat of the dragon and the burning ship, but they were unable to save themselves from the crushing force of the impact.

Statistics for manscorpion clerics and for wyrds are given individually. Manscorpion guards and giant scorpions encountered in the temple and on patrol have the following statistics:

Manscorpion guards: AC 1; HD 8; MV 240'(80'); #AT 2 (1 weapon/1 tail); Dmg 3-18/1-10 + poison; Save F8; ML 12; AL C; CD/34; huge pole arm. Because they consider the temple sacred, the manscorpions' morale is 12.

Each manscorpion guard is clean shaven and wears his hair in a long, complicated braid that signifies his status as a temple guard. The guards are forbidden to wear any upper body ornaments, such as jewelry, wrist bands, etc. However, this restriction does not include the lower body, and many guards wear tail streamers. Each streamer indicates a kill and is made from the hair and scalp of the guard's victim.

Manscorpions are unaffected by potions of *bug repellent,* but the giant scorpions of the temple are treated as normal giant bugs with regard to this potion.

Giant scorpions: AC 2; HD 4; MV 150'(50'); #AT 3 (2 claws/1 sting); Dmg 1-10/1-10/1-4 + poison; Save F2; ML 11; AL N; ER/55.

Using pigments and paints, the manscorpions have decorated their scorpion friends in bright colors and intricate patterns: bright yellow claws and legs with a black or green body; legs and body banded with bright red stripes; or each claw, leg, and the tail painted a different color. Also, the manscorpions have used charcoal to draw elaborate geometric designs on the claws and backs of the giant scorpions, who are completely unharmed by these decorations. The manscorpions do this to decorate their lair with living artwork; the designs have no other significance but may serve to mislead the PCs into thinking they have encountered some new variety of monster.

Level One

1. Entrance. If the PCs follow Aunt

Gertie's map, it leads them to a narrow valley running north to south between two high hills.

> You have been scrambling through the rocks for hours. It is dry and dusty, and the wind blows grit into your face constantly. You are now standing at the edge of a narrow ravine between two hills. Ahead of you, blocking the ravine, is a great pile of boulders, rocks, and stones obviously deposited here by a large avalanche. As you look at the tremendous pile of rubble, you notice two large openings near the bottom of the heap. It is obvious that the two cave entrances open onto the same tunnel, but why the tunnel has two openings is not immediately apparent.

If the PCs happen upon these two openings after dark, the manscorpions' watch fires (in areas 2 and 3) outline the caves clearly against the dark mass of rock. The flickering of the fires causes a constant shadow-play in the cave entrances, giving the impression that there are a great number of small, restless creatures fluttering about inside.

The cave openings are actually the empty eye sockets of the dragon's skull. The outside of the skull is completely buried under dirt and rubble, so that, other than the two openings, there is nothing to suggest a skull is there.

When the PCs enter either of the caves, read the following:

> Passing through the opening, you enter a small room with hard white walls. While the floor of the room is dirty and dusty, it appears to be made of the same white substance as the walls, which slowly curve together overhead to form a low, flat dome. The northern wall of the room contains a large, roughly made archway through which you can see red-gold firelight playing on the rough rock floor and walls of the room beyond.

2. Guardroom. The guardroom is built directly behind and on either side of the dragon's skull. It is constructed in such a way that the back of the skull is actually inside the guardroom. Like most other rooms in the temple complex, this area is lighted and heated by a large copper brazier mounted on a copper tripod. These braziers and tripods were made by the manscorpions from the melted copper pieces they found in the wreck of the airship. The braziers burn scented lamp oil that the manscopions captured from a large mule train that ventured too close to their temple. The room is continually manned by 10 **manscorpions** (hp 42 (×2), 36 (×6), 32 (×2)) and 10 **giant scorpions** (hp 25, 21 (×3), 18 (×4), 16 (×2)).

When the PCs enter this area, read the following to the players:

> As you enter this room, you notice immediately that the air has become hot and is heavily scented with sandalwood. The heat and aroma come from a large copper brazier burning in the center of the room. You are also immediately aware that you are surrounded by manscorpions and giant scorpions.

The manscorpions and giant scorpions attack at once. The manscorpion cleric in area 3 becomes aware of the fight immediately and arrives to attack within five rounds. Unless *silence* spells are used, the fight attracts the attention of other manscorpions (see area 4 for details).

Other than the brazier, which is worth 50 gp, there is nothing of value in the room.

3. Cleric's Room. This small room has been roughly hewn from the fused rock and is occupied by a manscorpion cleric. It contains a brazier and tripod exactly like the one found in the guardroom (area 2), making this area extremely hot. This cleric is in charge of the first level of the temple and will lead the guards and giant scorpions against intruders.

Molug (manscorpion cleric): AC 1; HD 8 (C8); hp 36; MV 240'(80'); #AT 2 (1 weapon/1 tail); Dmg 2-12 (hammer)/1-10 +poison; Save C8; ML 12; AL C; CD/34; spells: *cause fear, cause light wounds* (×2), *hold person, resist fire, silence 15' radius, cause disease, curse, cause serious wounds.* Molug is armed with a huge war hammer that is too large and unwieldy to be used by a human or demihuman. The cleric also wears a *ring of spell storing* with the following magic-user spells: *web, fireball, lightning bolt,* and *confusion.* The manscorpions have no way of recharging the ring.

Manscorpion clerics are easily identified by their shaved heads and full beards and mustaches. Other than magical rings, they are forbidden to wear any adornment whatsoever except when performing certain rituals and rites.

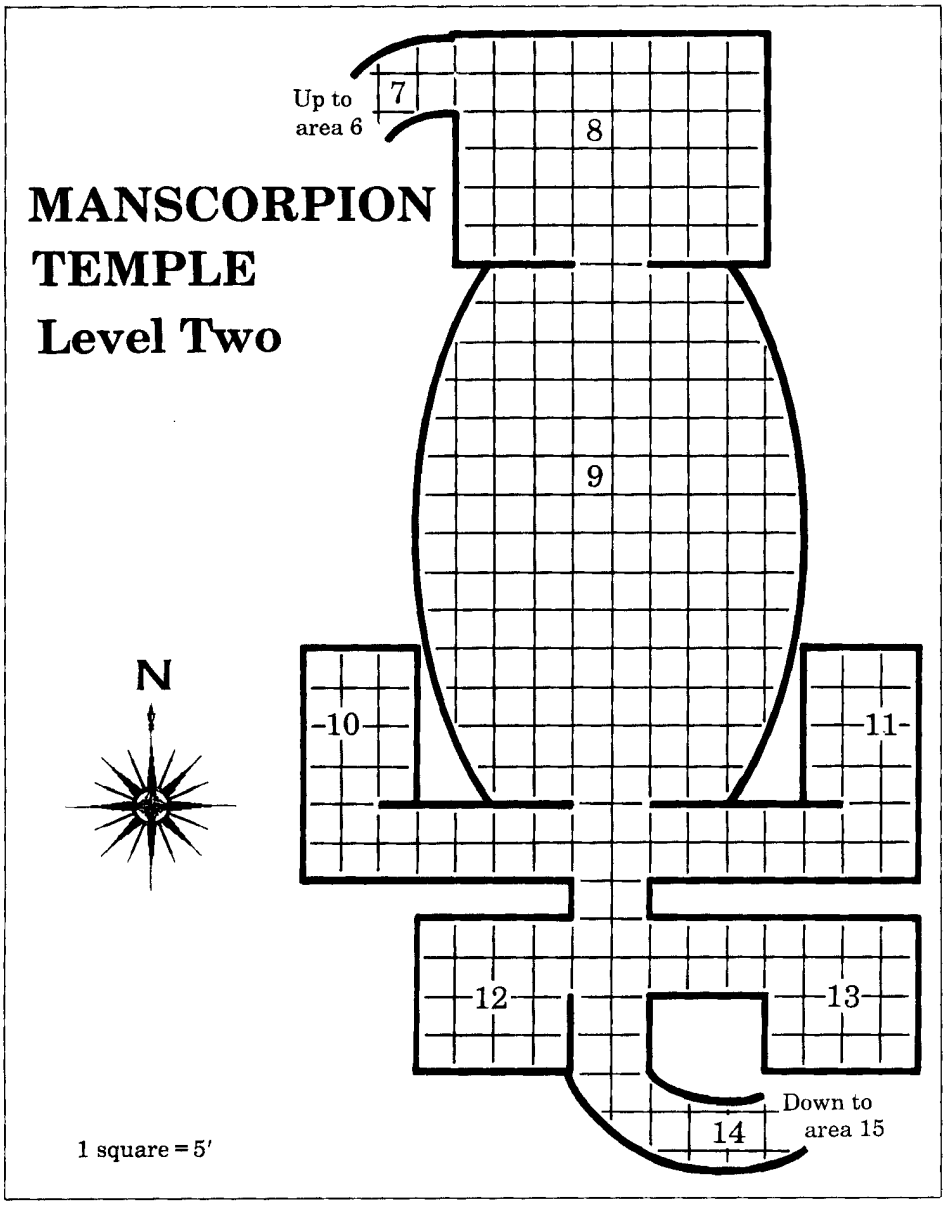
4. Patrol Quarters. This large room was excavated by the manscorpions from the fused rubble and scoria that covers the dragon's bones. It contains two copper braziers for heat and light, each worth 25 gp. The room is shared by 16 **manscorpions** (hp 40 (×2), 38 (×2), 36 (×10), 31 (×2)) and 16 **giant scorpions** (hp 22 (×4), 18 (×8), 16 (×4)) who patrol the area around the temple. The patrol works in 12-hour shifts, with eight manscorpions and eight giant scorpions patrolling while the other half eat and rest in area 4. This means that the room is always occupied. If the PCs fight the guards in area 2, the noise rouses all the creatures in area 4. They arm themselves and arrive as a group at the scene of battle in one turn. If the PCs use *silence* spells or somehow noiselessly overcome the guards in area 2, they have a chance to surprise the manscorpions and giant scorpions in this room.

5. Larder.

> This room is cool, damp, and reeking of rotting flesh. As you enter, you hear a soft buzzing sound like the noise from a sleeping beehive. As you look about the room, you see unidentifiable lumps and piles on the floor.

This is the food-storage area for the temple. If the PCs examine the lumps and piles on the floor, they find they are piles of carrion. Some of the carcasses are identifiable (a man, a pony, an orc, a giant fire beetle, etc.), but most are not. The manscorpions generally dine on the freshest meat, while the giant scorpions are given the more putrid remains (which they relish).

The room is filled with buzzing flies and insects. Anyone disturbing one of the carcasses or bringing in a light source brighter than a single candle causes the insects to swarm with the same effect as the clerical spell *insect plague.* However, because of the abundance of food in this room, the insect swarm will not pursue its victims. Once intruders are driven from the room, the swarm breaks up and returns to feeding.



6. Armory. This room contains 10 of the large pole arms favored by the insectoid warriors. It also contains several long bows, shields, and swords. The pole arms are unusable by anyone except a manscorpion, but the other arms can be used by any creature normally able to wield such weapons. The arms are worth 1,000 gp total. Manscorpion pole arms can be sold to an armorer for half the normal price of a pole arm, as the armorer must cut down and refit the weapon for human or demi-human use.

This room also contains picks, shovels, spikes, hammers, and miscellaneous mining gear, along with a small portable bellows, a large heavy anvil, and several kinds of metalworking hammers. The manscorpions do all their weapon forging and making of metal necessities outside the temple, because the interior is stuffy and not ventilated well enough to house a foundry or metalworking shop. All these tools, both mining and metalworking, are large and heavy but usable by humans and demi-humans.

7. Ramp Down. This ramp is steep and turns in a tight corkscrew around a large white central pillar. Closer inspection of the pillar reveals it is a large thigh bone of the dragon. Footing is good on the ramp due to the rough scoria floor.

> Looking over the side of the ramp, you see a great white pillar reaching down into darkness. Far below, you see the play of light and shadow from a flickering fire.

Level Two

8. Guardroom.

> The ramp leads directly into this room, which is unlit and has no brazier. Through the archway in the southern wall comes the flickering light you saw from above.
>
> This room has been roughly hewn from the scoria. It is hard to see clearly in the flickering shadow play, but you notice that something is coming toward you.

The room contains 10 **manscorpions** (hp 41 (×3), 36 (×4), 30 (×3)) and 12 **giant scorpions** (hp 23 (×4), 18 (×8)). They immediately attack any nonmanscorpion attempting to enter.

9. Temple Area. The temple, which is within the great empty chest cavity of the dragon, is entered through a large archway carved in the shape of a giant scorpion pincer.

> When you enter, you see a huge golden brazier mounted on a tripod of silver. It stands in the center of the room, flooding the area with a beautiful red-gold light. Looking up, you see running along the center of the roof what appears to be a great supporting buttress. Arching down from this huge buttress, forming a symmetrical line on both sides of the hall, are gigantic pillars that arc outward in graceful curves from ceiling to floor.
>
> Near the southern end of the hall, the pillars curve inward across the floor to merge and form a large white dais, a massive, irregularly square-shaped block. The buttress overhead, the pillars, and the dais all gleam like polished ivory even in the reddish light. Resting on the dais,

starkly black against the gleaming white, is a large, rough-squared bit of scoria.

Your eyes are drawn away from the dais and pillars to the wondrous floor. It is solid silver with an immense swirling pattern of gold imbedded here and there with gems. The swirling gold pattern forms the vague shape of a manscorpion holding a scimitar. Two rubies are the eyes of the figure, and it is crowned with several diamonds. The wavy gold tail of the manscorpion ends in a large emerald stinger dripping sapphires.

The great buttress overhead is actually the dragon's backbone. The pillars arching down from it are the creature's ribs, and the dais is the huge breastbone of the dragon. The impact of the crash jolted the dragon's wings wide apart, and they were buried under the avalanche of rubble. For this reason, the wings cannot be seen in the temple.

The floor of the temple is actually a thin layer of precious metal and gems stretched over the rough granite of the crash site. The golden manscorpion figure in the floor is a purely accidental design in the melted gold and silver. The manscorpions, of course, see things differently. They believe the figure is a sign from Skorpios requiring that they build a temple on this site.

The golden brazier and silver tripod were made by the manscorpions from gold and silver found in the crash site. The brazier and tripod are worth 1,000 gp and 250 gp respectively. If the floor is broken up and removed, it is worth 25,000 gp in precious metals and 10,000 gp in gems.

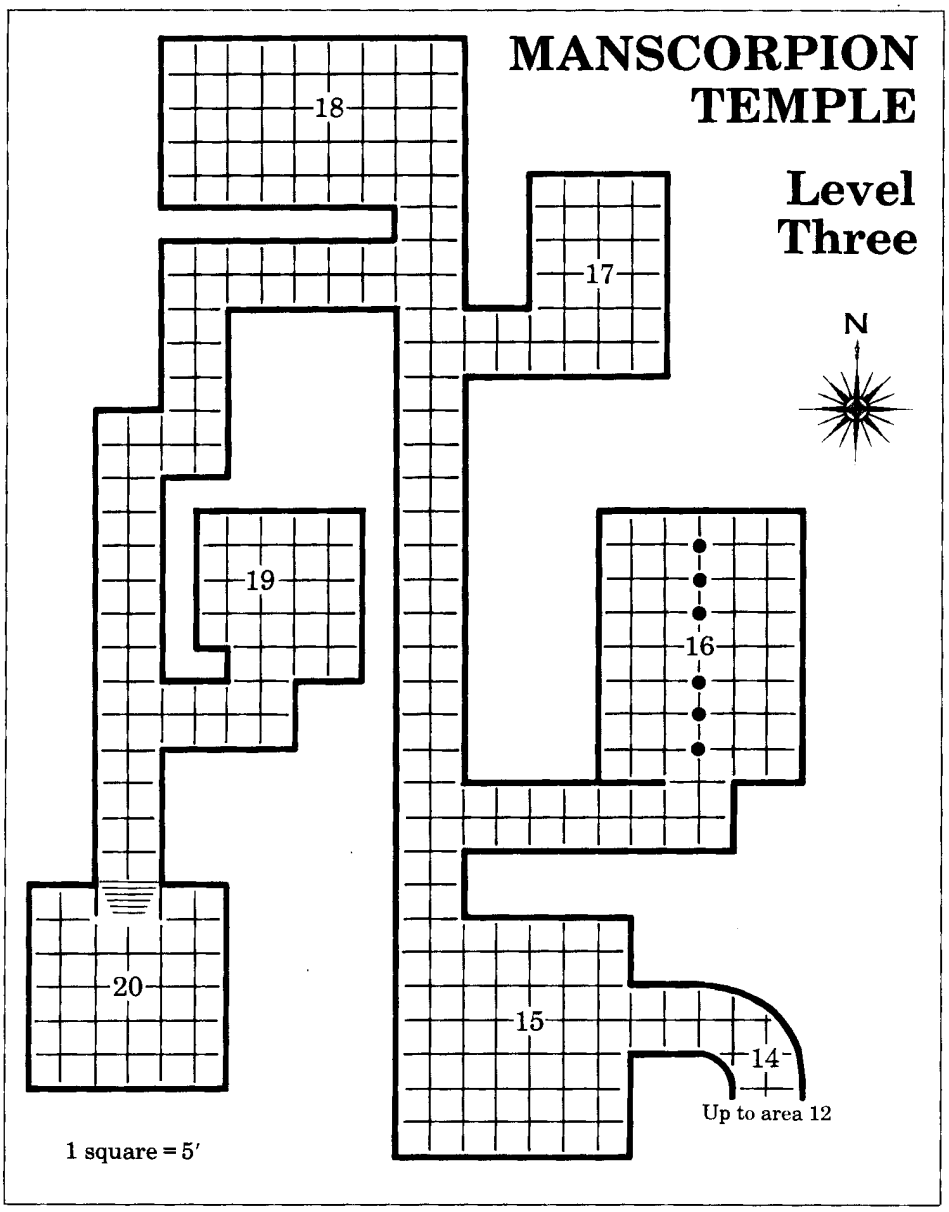
There is a 50% chance that Lysunts, the manscorpion cleric in charge of this level, is in the temple when the PCs enter. See area 10 for more information on Lysunts.

10. Priest's Quarters.

Upon entering this room, you immediately notice the bones of a large claw. Just over your heads, it reaches down from the ceiling, talons outstretched, as if to grasp something in the room. Beneath the claw is a circle of 20 human and demi-human skulls. The floor of the room is like that of the temple, solid silver with a swirl of gold. The gold forms no clear design but looks vaguely like a running man.

This room belongs to a 10th-level manscorpion cleric named Lysunts. He is in charge of the second level of the temple and will organize and lead its defense. There is a 50% chance that Lysunts is in this room. If he is not here, he is in the temple (area 9). If he is in the temple when the PCs engage the manscorpions in area 8, he rushes to the scene immediately. If he is in his quarters, he will not hear the disturbance.

This room has been excavated around the dragon's right foreclaw. It is used by Lysunts as a kind of bedroom, temple office, and meditation chamber. The circle of skulls is used in an arcane manscorpion ritual dedicated to Skorpios and has no other significance. If the PCs handle or disturb the skulls, they hear something rattle in each. Each



skull contains a gem placed there by Lysunts when he consecrated the circle. The gems are worth 500 gp (×2), 100 gp (×12), and 10 gp (×6). If the floor is broken up and removed, it is worth 5,000 gp.

Lysunts: AC 1; C10; hp 45; MV 240'(80'); #AT 2 (1 weapon/1 tail); Dmg 2-12 (mace)/1-10+poison; Save C10; ML 12; AL C; spells: *cause fear, cause light wounds* (×2), *darkness, blight, hold person, resist fire, silence 15' radius, continual darkness, locate object, striking, cause serious wounds, dispel magic, insect plague.* He is armed with a large mace that, like most manscorpion weapons, is too unwieldy for human or demihuman use. Lysunts carries a *staff of dispelling* with 12 charges left; he will use the staff freely in defending himself.

11. Meditation Room. This large room is occupied by three manscorpion clerics and is used primarily for meditation and prayer. The walls, ceiling, and floor are rough scoria. This room has been excavated around the dragon's left foreclaw. The horrendous impact of the airship hitting the ground dislocated and twisted the dragon's foreleg. However, the bones are unbroken and run across the floor, ending with the entire claw turning upward toward the ceiling. The four razor-sharp talons curl slightly toward one another, and resting upon these is a *brazier of commanding fire elementals.* The very nature of this device allowed it to survive the fire and heat of the crash. In melee, the manscorpion clerics will use the brazier immediately.

Nogush, Imneses, and **Sigint** (manscorpion clerics): AC 1; C8; hp 48, 36, 30; MV 240'(80'); #AT 2 (1 weapon/1 tail); Dmg 2-12 (mace)/1-10+poison; Save C8; ML 12; AL C; large mace; spells:

Nogush and Imneses: *cause fear, cause light wounds, darkness, blight, hold person, silence 15' radius, curse, striking, cause serious wounds.*

Sigint: *cause light wounds, darkness, detect magic, find traps, hold person, resist fire, continual darkness, cause disease, dispel magic.*

12. Storage. This room is hewn from the rough granite. It contains equipment and gear used in temple ceremonies. If the PCs search the room, they can find ceremonial knives and daggers, several whistles, a brass bell, a large drum, six small bannerlike tapestries, candles, incense, and a few objects of unknown use. There are also several large kegs and casks of the scented lamp oil used by the manscorpions. All items found here are nonmagical and of no particular value to anyone other than a manscorpion.

13. Clerics' Quarters. This is a small, rather cramped room. The three clerics in the meditation room (area 11) and the cleric in third-level guardroom (area 15) use this room as their personal quarters. In the center of the room is a small unlit brazier worth 25 gp.

14. Ramp Down.

This ramp has been tunneled through the rock. It circles down in one great slow curve. The walls are rough hewn and damp. At first it isn't obvious, but as you descend, a red-gold light begins to play about the walls, ceiling, and floor. The source of this light is apparently at the end of the curving, descending tunnel.

If the PCs are carrying their own light sources, the red-gold light is still visible ahead of the party, just out of range of their light sources. There is neither treasure nor dragon bones visible anywhere along the course of the ramp.

Level Three

15. Guardroom.

> You step out of the tunnel into a room that seems to have been literally battered out of the rock and scoria. And, unlike any other room in the temple, it has a wooden floor, its surface blackened and charred in many places. This room is large and well lit by a large copper brazier in the center. The room seems to be occupied.

This guardroom is the last remnant of the *Pride of the Sky.* The floor is made of the shattered and scorched keel of the airship. The room contains six **manscorpions** (hp 41, 36 (×4), 31), six **giant scorpions** (hp 25, 19 (×5), and an 8th-level **manscorpion cleric** (hp 35, see area 11 for complete statistics) with the spells *cause light wounds* (×2), *darkness, hold person* (×2), *silence 15' radius, curse, striking,* and *cause serious wounds.* The manscorpion cleric wears a *ring of fire resistance.* The large copper brazier is worth 50 gp.

16. High Priest's Quarters.

> The walls, floors, and ceiling of this large room are of the rough scoria common throughout the temple. Down the center of the room, running north to south, are stark white pillars that seem to be made of stacked, irregular-shaped rings. Though misshapen, the rings are all exactly alike and fit snugly one upon the other. The pillars become gradually smaller from south to north. The southernmost pillar is nearly 6' in diameter, while the northernmost is only 2' in diameter.

This is the lair of Sanxshun, high priest of the Temple of Skorpios. Closer inspection reveals the pillars are actually sections of the dragon's tail. Some of the tail vertebrae were quarried from the rock and rubble. Then, long sections of the tail were separated and used as supporting columns in Sanxshun's hall.

Sanxshun will defend the third level and the treasure hoard (see areas 19 and 20). He absolutely detests all humans and demi-humans. He will, however, negotiate with the PCs, but only to lure them into the open or to buy time for his warriors to launch an attack. If the PCs fight the guards in area 15, Sanxshun hears the disturbance and rushes to help his guards. If the fight is going against Sanxshun, he retreats to area 20 and attempts to guard the treasure hoard of the temple.

Sanxshun: AC −1; C13; hp 59; MV 240'(80'); #AT 2 (1 weapon/1 tail); Dmg 2-12 (hammer)/1-10 + poison; Save C13; ML 11; AL C; spells: *cause fear, cause light wounds, darkness, detect magic, light, bless, blight, hold person, resist fire, silence 15' radius, continual darkness, continual light, cause disease, curse, animate dead, cause serious wounds, dispel magic, cause critical wounds*, truesight*, animate objects, barrier** (* = from the Companion Set). Sanxshun uses a large war hammer, wears a *ring of protection +2,* and carries a *staff of earth and fire* with 16 charges left.

Sanxshun is getting old, and his beard is turning gray, but this does not affect his fighting ability. He has a bright blue scorpion tattooed across his shaven head. All manscorpion high priests have such tattoos; the color of the tattoo signifies the importance of the temple to which the high priest belongs. The darker the color, the more important the temple. As a high priest moves up in rank and takes command of more important temples, the darker colors are tattooed over the lighter ones. If a high priest falls from favor and is demoted, he doesn't have to worry about being tattooed again with a lighter color. His tattoo is simply removed—at the neck.

17. Clerical Storage.

> This room is nothing but a rough, square chamber chiseled out of the rock. Down the center of the room, hanging from some sort of cloak rack, are some unusual-looking items of cloth.

The room contains robes, capes, caps, phylacteries, stinger hoods, tail ribbons, and other ritual and ceremonial vestments used by manscorpion clerics. The "cloak rack" from which all these vestments hang is a narrow band of spiny linked vertebrae that runs down the center of the ceiling. These bones are the very end of the dragon's tail, left undisturbed when the room was excavated. The PCs must remove some of the garments from their bony hangers to discover that this is actually part of the dragon's skeleton.

18. Crypts.

> This room is very strange in appearance. The walls and floor are rough scoria. The ceiling is 60' high and slightly vaulted. Imbedded in the ceiling are what appear to be dagger blades of gold and silver. The room also contains eight large slabs of rough scoria. On five of these rest the mummified remains of manscorpions.

This chamber is where dead manscorpion clerics are entombed. Three of the mummies are Undead. In most respects, manscorpion mummies are treated as normal mummies. However, because they are protecting a temple dedicated to their Immortal, these mummies are Turned as spirits on the Cleric Turning Undead Tables. They also have a greater number of Hit Dice than normal mummies and save at a higher level. Manscorpion mummies can sting with their tails for 1-10 hp damage but are no longer able to inject poison. However, anyone stung by a manscorpion mummy is afflicted with the rotting disease caused by the touch of a mummy. Once disturbed, the mummies pursue the PCs throughout the complex until either they or the PCs are destroyed.

Manscorpion mummies (3): AC 3; HD 8 + 1; hp 42, 37, 31; MV 60'(20'); #AT 2 (1 touch/1 tail); Dmg 1-12 (fists)/1-10 + disease; Save F8; ML 12; AL C; ER/54; SD harmed only by spells, fire, or magical weapons (all of which do only half damage); immune to *sleep, charm,* and *hold* spells.

If *levitating* or flying PCs inspect the ceiling, they can see that the dagger blades are actually thin, twisted shafts of gold and silver. This phenomenon was caused when the gold and silver coins in the wreck melted and ran down between the loose rocks like hot wax in a mold. When the manscorpions excavated this room, they carefully removed the rock and left the bizarre stilettos of precious metal. If removed from the ceiling, the gold and silver blades are worth 5,000 gp total. However, the

metal blades help support the ceiling, and if they are removed, there is a 75% chance that the roof will collapse, doing 6-36 hp damage to anyone in the room. The PCs must support the ceiling in some way (simple wooden beams work nicely) before extracting the gold and silver, or they risk being crushed and buried alive by the collapsing roof.

19. Lesser Hold.

This room is carved from the fused rock and scoria. Running across the arched ceiling are four large white buttresses. The room is unlit and contains an unusual assortment of treasure. In the northeast corner is a pile of six partially melted silver statues, while stacked neatly in the northwest corner are five large blocks of welded coins. Also in the room are four dark, robed figures that hold small glowing red spheres in each hand. The figures are moving toward you.

Soon after the airship crashed, evil spirits possessed the bodies of several elves. These evil spirits came from a deserted plateau known as Natoka's Grave, 20 miles east of the crash site. Natoka's Grave is a sacred burial ground of the red orcs. These evil spirits, known as wyrds, haunted the area of the crash site until the coming of the manscorpions. When the manscorpions found the crash site, they negotiated with the wyrds and made allies of them rather than destroying them. Thus, the manscorpions have excellent guards for their treasure, and the wyrds can remain at the crash site. The wyrds are rewarded for their service by being given all the manscorpions' elven prisoners. In this treasure room are three normal wyrds and one greater wyrd. They immediately attack any nonmanscorpion entering the room but will not pursue the PCs beyond the temple area (area 9).

Normal wyrds (3): AC 4; HD 4; hp 20 each; MV 120'(40'); #AT 2; Dmg 1-6/1-6; Save E4; ML 12; AL C; CC/89. Each wyrd attacks using two glowing spheres for 1d6 hp damage per sphere (1d6 + 3 hp damage vs. elves). Clerics Turn normal wyrds as wraiths.

Greater wyrd: AC 0; HD 8; hp 35; MV 120'(40'), flying 240'(80'); #AT 2; Dmg 1-10/1-10 + paralysis; Save E8; ML 12; AL C; CC/89. The greater wyrd attacks by striking with or hurling two glowing spheres. A hit by a sphere causes 1-10 hp damage; the victim must make a Saving Throw vs. Paralysis or be paralyzed for 2-8 turns. Elves struck by the spheres take 1d10 + 5 hp damage but are immune to the globes' paralyzing effects. In addition, anyone viewing these hideous creatures must make a Saving Throw vs. Spells or attack with a −3 penalty to both hit and damage rolls. Greater wyrds are Turned as phantoms.

Both normal and greater wyrds can be hit only by magical or silver weapons. They are immune to *sleep, charm,* and *hold* spells.

The buttresses in the ceiling are the bones and talons of one of the great rear claws of the dragon. The claw is arched and spread, as if the dragon were stooping down on its prey.

The fires that melted the treasure were not hot enough to melt all of it thoroughly. Some chests of coins and many statues were not melted completely and survived in disfigured form. One of the statues in this room is possibly a horse, though it is difficult to tell. Another statue is definitely the representation of a dancer, but the head of the figure has been completely melted away. The other four statues are humanoid figures, badly melted. The statues are worth 200 gp each.

In some parts of the burning *Pride,* the heat generated was insufficient to melt metal coins but was more than enough to incinerate the wooden chests holding them. The coins in such chests were welded together into large, ungainly masses. The blocks of coin in the northwest corner of the room still retain the shape of the wooden chests that once held them. One of the blocks contains gold coins worth a total of 400 gp. Three blocks are of silver coins, worth 200 gp and 100 gp (×2). The last block is of mixed gold, silver, and copper coins, worth a total of 150 gp. No usable coins can be hammered loose or in any way removed from the mass of welded metal. The blocks must be melted down before the metal can be used again.

20. Treasure Hold.

This is nothing but a rough, square-shaped room that the manscorpions cut out of the rock for holding their treasure. A large rough stairway runs from the entrance down to the center of the room 40' below.

The floor of this room is cluttered with all sorts of valuable objects. You can see chunks of gold, silver, and copper as well as many gems and bejewelled items scattered about. This is obviously the main treasury of the temple.

Naturally, the room is well guarded, containing two **manscorpion mummies** (hp 40, 33; see area 18 for complete statistics), two **greater wyrds** (hp 43, 36), and six **normal wyrds** (hp 20 each; see area 19 for complete wyrd statistics). The mummies and the wyrds work together to defend the room. These creatures remain out of sight in alcoves built under the stairs. They allow intruders to enter the room, then rush out to defend the stairs and prevent their foes' escape. If Sanxshun has chosen to make his last stand in this room, he cooperates with these tactics. Should the PCs escape from the room, Sanxshun (if he is present and still alive) and the mummies pursue them throughout the complex. The wyrds will not pursue past area 9.

On the floor of the treasury are the following: 10 large chunks of copper worth 10 gp each; eight large chunks of silver worth 100 gp each; three chunks of gold worth 500 gp each; two small chunks of platinum worth 500 gp each; and 10 large chunks of copper, silver, and gold all melted together, worth 75 gp each. These chunks were apparently knocked or hammered loose from the walls, ceiling, and floors.

Scattered over the floor of the room among the hunks and chunks of metal are over 500 gems worth 500 gp, 400 gp (×2), 300 gp (×2), 200 gp (×3), 100 gp (×5), 50 gp (×8), 25 gp (×25), 20 gp (×25), 10 gp (×80), 5 gp (×175), and 1 gp (×200). Unfortunately, most of the gems were cracked or scarred by the heat of the crash, reducing their value.

Mixed with the gems and pieces of precious metal are 35 damaged pieces of jewelry and bejewelled items worth a total of 5,000 gp. Because they were all damaged in the crash and fire, these items no longer have any worth beyond the value of the gems and precious metal that can be recovered from them.

(continued on page 72)

ANCIENT BLOOD

BY GRANT AND DAVID BOUCHER

When falls the axe of Mok-Turoknin.

Artwork by Allen Nunis

Grant Boucher wishes to credit his brother, David, for the inspiration for "Ancient Blood." The adventure was based on a frost giant keep that David designed many years ago and ran in a very deadly Norse campaign. The writing itself and the majority of the Gothic literary style are Grant's contributions to the adventure. He would like to dedicate this adventure to Dr. Marie Nelson, University of Florida.

Grant is currently living happily with his fiancée, Julie Garcia, and fielding numerous offers from gaming companies. David is a senior at the University of Florida, majoring in archaeology. He would like to dedicate this adventure to the memory of Robert E. Howard.

"Ancient Blood" is an AD&D® arctic adventure designed for 4-8 characters of 3rd-5th level (about 24 total levels). All character classes are recommended, although a druid might not be comfortable in the mountain keep of the giants. Dwarves and humans are most suitable for the terrain encountered here, but hardy elves might find the treasure worth the inconveniences. A ranger or barbarian is also highly recommended.

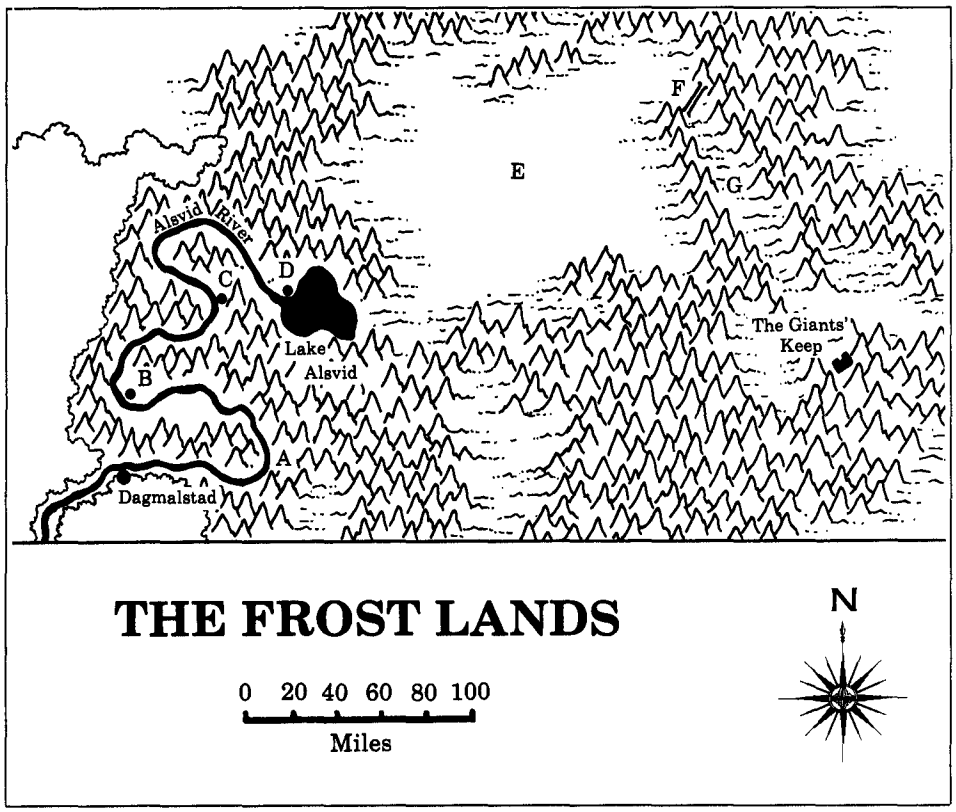
The PCs should not have a lot of magic or gold in their possession. They should at least be warned not to openly display such things, since the people encountered in this area are very superstitious. The PCs should have little or no experience with giants (especially frost giants), since much of the adventure is meant to awe novice adventurers.

To enhance the module's gothic air, you are encouraged to turn down the lights and light a few candles during the course of the adventure. In the later sections, the room temperature should be turned down as well.

For the Dungeon Master

To begin the adventure, you must arrange to have the party sail, *teleport,* or be shipwrecked near the northern port city of Dagmalstad. The promise of wealth and adventure is usually sufficient; you may wish to have the PCs come across an advertisement for caravan guards placed by the merchants of Dagmalstad.

Read pages 18-29 of the *Wilderness Survival Guide* for information on arctic and subarctic adventuring before play begins. Much of the difficulty of this adventure is in adapting to a cold



and alien environment (arctic/subarctic, above 70° north latitude), and this adventure has been designed to fully test the mettle of wilderness adventurers while they still don't have enough magic to completely protect them from the elements. Fortunately, the party begins this adventure during the warmest part of the year (June-July).

The entire adventure is filled with references to ancient Norse gods and their cultures. Reading the relevant sections in *Legends & Lore* or any books on Viking societies and myths would greatly add to the flavor and enjoyment of the adventure. You might pick up additional ideas for arctic and Norse campaigning as well, easily integrating them before, during, or after the events described here.

Unless otherwise stated, all NPCs encountered are zero-level humans with the following statistics: AC 10; MV 12; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 9; AL LN-LG; unarmed.

Adventure Background

The small city of Dagmalstad is situated at the mouth of the swift-flowing Alsvid River on a peninsula known as the Frost Lands. Famous for its fur trade, this city has found a place on some of the more detailed maps of the area. The town is laid out in the pattern of an old Scandinavian-type city, with approximately 50 buildings made out of stone, wood, or wattle and daub. The entire city is surrounded by a sturdy wooden wall, 20′ tall, with a water gate to the southwest for ships to enter and a land gate leading northeast into the forest.

In the center of the city is a large market where all manner of equipment, jewelry, and clothing can be found. The streets of this market are wooden plank walkways, and carts, wagons, and horses are prohibited from entering the market area. Coins, rough nuggets of precious metal, and bartering are common means of exchange in Dagmalstad market.

When the PCs enter the town, they are greeted at the dock by dozens of **children** (hp 1-2 each) who try to outshout each other in promoting their parents' taverns, stores, and goods. Some of these children might be aspiring pickpockets. Any simple questions about the town can be answered by these youngsters, who follow the PCs until they reach the market area, then return home to their parents with news of the strangers' arrival.

After the PCs have become familiar with the town, they are greeted by three well-dressed merchants wearing brightly colored wool tunics and rich fur cloaks. The men ask the PCs if they are in need of a job. If the party is in search of adventure, the merchants quickly become quite interested, and a meeting is arranged for dinner at the Boar's Tusk Inn, to which the PCs are given directions.

At the tavern, the PCs are offered 500 gp each to travel northeast to the village of Drinidok with a shipment of rare medicinal herbs. The PCs are to be paid only upon their return. If they agree to the terms, the PCs are given a wooden box, a crude map (based on the map of the Frost Lands, areas A-D only), and a scroll tube with the merchant guild's seal on it. The map is hardly necessary, however, as the only route to Drinidok follows the canyon of the Alsvid River.

At this time, the PCs should equip themselves for the trip. Any gear needed for snow or mountain travel can be bought in Dagmalstad at the prices listed in the 2nd Edition *Players Handbook,* pages 66-69. Most normal weapons can be found as well, but available armor is limited to a few sets of scale mail, chain mail, studded leather, and leather armor.

The box contains a few pounds of black lotus worth a total of 500 gp. This herb is needed by the chieftain of Drinidok to help relieve his hallucinations and nightmares (see area D). Black lotus can be either a powerful hallucinogen or, if prepared carefully, a safe sedative. The letter in the scroll tube says only: "Chief Noatun, good luck with your troubles. We wish you the best. The Merchants of Dagmalstad."

A. The Mountain River Pass. Frozen during most of the year, the Alsvid River flows swiftly through the mountains in this season. The mountains here are very old, and their peaks are worn from erosion. The width of the pass ranges from a mile across to only a few hundred yards, and the ground is covered with light snow and scattered patches of grass. The PCs may travel on horses (at normal rates) or similar mounts if they properly equip the beasts for the climate.

There should be no extraordinary monsters encountered, as the pass has been tamed with repeated trips between Dagmalstad and Drinidok, but four mastodons recently escaped (or were stolen) from the stables of the local animal traders' guild and are still on the loose. Also, a number of ground tremors have recently shaken the region, and the party should be warned to beware of avalanches and similar dangers.

Check for random encounters in the mountain pass once during the day and once at night. Encounters occur on a roll of 1 on 1d6. If an encounter is indicated, roll 1d6 or choose from the following list:

1: **Brown bears** (6): AC 6; MV 12; HD 5+5; hp 42, 37, 32, 27, 22, 17; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-8; SA hug for 2-12 hp damage; ML 9; AL N; MC (bear). These bears are fishing for salmon along the river. Four of them are in the water; the other two are basking in the sun. Any PC who approaches within 20′ of a bear has a 10% cumulative chance per round of annoying the bear enough that it tries to chase the party away from the area. If the party attacks any of the bears, there's a 90% chance that all of the bears join in the melee.

2: **Caribou** (4-24): AC 6; MV 24; HD 3; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA stampede; Size M (6′ tall at shoulder); ML 4; AL N; XP value 45. For more information, see "Animal, Herd" in the *Monstrous Compendium.* The party may hunt these animals for food.

3: **Tribesmen** (11-20 zero-level humans, encountered only within 3 hexes of areas A or D; reroll elsewhere). These men and women are hunting for food. If they are encountered near the village of Drinidok (area D), they will travel with the party if shown the scroll tube with the merchant guild's seal. If encountered near Dagmalstad, they simply exchange greetings and go their own way.

4: **Giant owl:** AC 6; MV 3, Fl 18 (E); HD 4; hp 26; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 2-8/2-8/2-5; SA surprise; ML 12; AL N; MC. This creature is flying around in search of food for her young. She will not attack the PCs unless there is a small animal of some sort (familiar or pet) in their midst. If she spots such an animal, the owl swoops down and tries to grab her prey before anyone can react. In her nest (located in a rock formation about a mile away) are three owlets worth 500 gp each in Dagmalstad or Drinidok.

5: **Wolves** (2-20): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 14 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; ML 10; AL N; MC. This pack is wandering the area in search of easy game. There is a 25% chance that the wolves are hungry enough to attack even a powerful party.

6: **Mastodons** (1-3): AC 6; MV 15; HD 12; hp 96, 85, 45; THAC0 9; #AT 5; Dmg 2-16/2-16/2-12/2-12/2-12; ML 7; AL N; MC (elephant). These creatures are not the mastodons that were stolen from Dagmalstad (see area C). There is a 25% chance to encounter a mated pair of mastodons (accompanied by a newborn calf 75% of the time). Otherwise, the PCs find a lone mastodon (who is probably looking for a mate). Unless provoked, the mastodons do not attack.

B. Hidden Grotto.

> The cold, dry air is broken by a blast of warm steam rising from a newly formed crack in the ground in front of you. A slippery rock slide leads down into the foggy darkness.

If the PCs follow the slide down, they come to a warm, lightless chamber about 20′ below the trail. Water can be heard bubbling quietly close by. Any party member who proceeds far enough to take a good look into the pool of water should make two saving throws (one vs. spells, one vs. poison) against the deadly gaze and horrifying appearance of the pool's resident.

Sea hag: AC 7; MV 15; HD 3; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA death look; SD frightful appearance, 50% magic resistance; ML 12; AL CE; MM1/86.

The hag lies just under the water, waiting for anyone or anything to come near. Even if the PC survives the death gaze, the sea hag will attempt to grab and drag her victim into the water and through a secret tunnel at the bottom of the north end of the pool that leads to her slimy sunken lair. There is breathable air inside the lair, and the hag's treasure is here (see below).

Long ago, this disgusting creature was caught by some aquatic elves far to the south. She had committed no crime in their presence, but they didn't wish to be bothered with her, so they forced her to flee the area. The hag managed to pilfer a *ring of warmth* and some pearls during her northward journey and has lived happily along these arctic coasts for many years. When the most recent earthquake struck, the crack opened and she discovered the hot springs during a hunt for food.

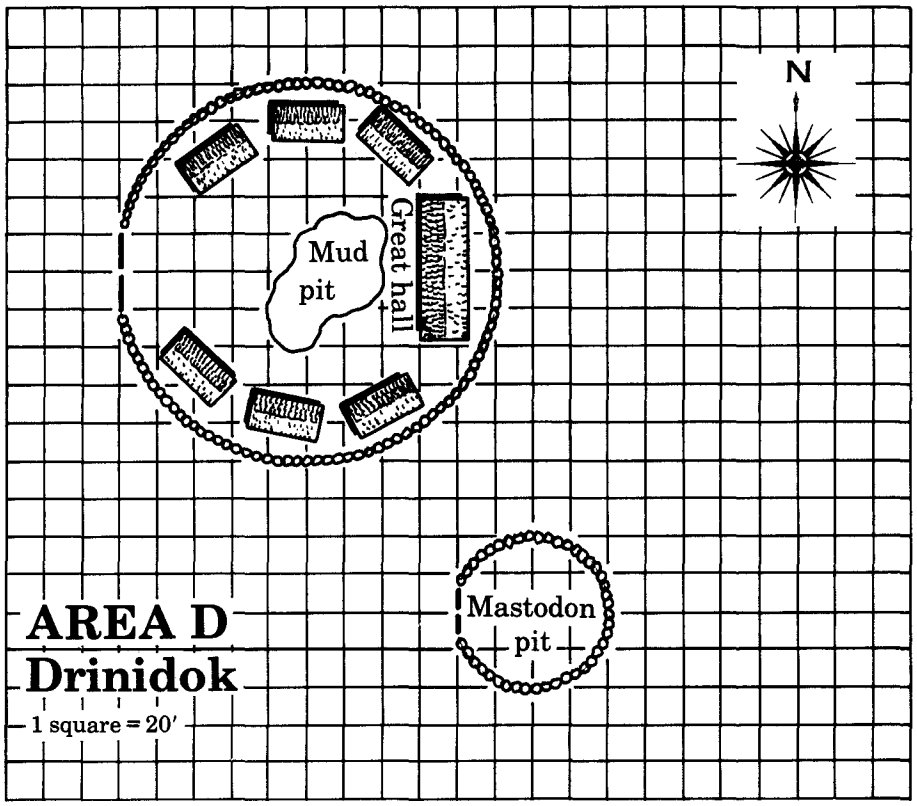
In her slime-covered lair are the remains of a few victims and four 300-gp pearls. One of the pearls is actually a *pearl of the sirens.*

C. The Trappers. These four half-ogres are rude, crude, and obnoxious, to say the least. They have traveled across the sea to this area in the hopes of getting rich from the untamed wilderness. Feeling that their current mode of transportation (walking) was unacceptable, they proceeded to steal four mastodons from the stables at Dagmalstad. Fortune was with them that day, and a storm covered their tracks, allowing them to escape with relative ease. They have been hiding in this pass for a few weeks now and have set up a temporary encampment from which they hunt for rare animals for their pelts.

Half-ogres (4): AC 8; MV 12; F3; hp 26, 24, 22, 20; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA 18/76 strength; ML 12; AL NE; leather armor; see below for weapons. Half-ogres are briefly described in DUNGEON® issue #4, pages 42-43, and in the Best of DRAGON® Magazine anthology, vol. IV, pages 46-47.

The trappers' camp is situated in a circular depression in the snow, about 70′ in diameter. In the center of the depression, a campfire is always kept burning, and four **mastodons** (hp 96, 85, 80, 75; see area A random encounters for complete statistics) occupy most of the southeastern part of the camp. Sleeping bags are laid out in the southwest corner, while a great pile of cages occupies the northwest section. A large stone is positioned between two shallow pits to the north. One pit contains skins and pelts, while the other is overflowing with dead animal carcasses (a druid should be offended at this wastefulness).

Two humanoid figures lie together against the eastern side of the cages. If they inspect the figures closely, the PCs can recognize them as tribesmen from Dagmalstad. They have been horribly mutilated and are quite dead. A success-



ful intelligence check on 1d20 by a ranger or a druid will determine that the half-ogres have been using the tribesmen for bait in catching some of their bigger game.

When encountered (be it night or day), the half-breeds are each be in a different area of the camp. **Rok** (hp 26; bastard sword) is sitting on a rock, skinning animals. **Gor** (hp 24; throwing spear) is tending to the mastodons. **Mog** (hp 22; footman's flail) is resting on his sleeping bag. **Bor** (hp 20; two-handed sword) is supposed to be on guard but is among the cages, taunting a captured hoar fox.

Hoar fox: AC 6; MV 15; HD 2; hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA breath weapon; SD immune to cold-based attacks; ML 9; AL N; FF/50.

Bor is not very smart, so if the PCs attempt to be stealthy, the half-ogres will probably not notice them. If the party attacks, the captured hoar fox will aid the party by breathing on any half-ogres within its range.

The half-ogres' treasure is in a variety of forms. The skins (including a polar bear fur worth 300 gp) are worth 500 gp total. The mastodons themselves will command a reward of 200 gp each if safely returned to the town of Dagmalstad. Rok is wearing a gold nose ring (10 gp) and keeps a 150-gp ruby in his left boot toe. Gor possesses 75 gp in silver (kept in his sleeping bag) and a *throwing spear +1*. Mog is wearing a gold head band (50 gp) and a silver bracelet (75 gp). Bor is wearing a silver and sapphire ring worth 450 gp (though he doesn't know it's worth that much).

You should keep the PCs in the dark about the value of the jewelry, pelts, mastodons, etc., unless the adventurers possess the appropriate nonweapon proficiencies to determine the worth of these items.

If the hoar fox and the mastodons are released, the fox follows the PCs wherever they go as long as he is fed and not mistreated. The trained mastodons eventually return to their stable in Dagmalstad.

D. The Village of Drinidok.

> The sky has been darkening for the last few hours, and now the snow has begun to fall heavily. The full moon has just begun to replace the fading sun above you. Fortunately, the smoke rising ahead indicates civilization. As you round the bend, you see the stone gates of the village of Drinidok.

Drinidok is a barbarian village, very similar to 11th-century Viking settlements. The small village is set on the shores of Lake Alsvid where the Alsvid River begins its long journey toward Dagmalstad. Drinidok is surrounded by one circular stone wall, and its buildings are either made of stone or mud and wattle. The people fish for salmon along the Alsvid River and in Lake Alsvid, hunt for food along the Vigrid Plains, and capture an occasional mastodon for trade with Dagmalstad. Captured mastodons are kept outside the village in a circular stone pen.

The people of Drinidok are superstitious, hard-working folk who have little wealth but maintain strong customs and traditional values. Therefore, the PCs should avoid flaunting great jewels or magic in public. The higher tribal leaders, however, are more enlightened than their people, and the party can freely display such treasures in their presence.

The storm breaks just as the PCs pass through the gates of Drinidok, and they are quickly taken to the main long house (the largest and warmest building in the village) for safety. Their steeds are likewise safely sheltered from the elements.

> The storm becomes a terrible blizzard minutes after you get indoors. Signs of preparation for a long night are everywhere. The long stone structure you are in is obviously the central meeting hall for the villagers. The walls are lined with woven tapestries, furs, trophies, shields, and primitive weapons of every type. The floor is covered in reeds and cheap furs. Half a dozen rough beds line the walls, one larger than the others. A large open pit of smoldering coals fills the center of the building with warmth and some light. Against one wall is a large wooden chair with two smaller chairs on either side. A decorative hammer is engraved on each of the three chairs. On the other side of the hearth is an inviting tray of breads,

an open keg of mead, and a haunch of roast venison on a spit.

After a short while, two snow-covered men thickly bundled in furs enter the large hut. The larger of the two presents himself as Chief Noatun and introduces his son, Ian. The chief is a hearty man in his late 60s, with long gray hair and a thick beard and mustache. His furs are rich, and around his neck is a large gold medallion in the shape of a hammer. His normally stern features are pale, and his lips are trembling slightly. He seems deeply troubled.

His son, Ian, is in his late 20s, strong and handsome, but his lack of bulk or visible scars shows that he is less inclined toward war than is his father. His long blond hair is braided in traditional Viking style, and his face is clean shaven.

Noatun's necklace is worth 250 gp. The amulet is in the form of the hammer Mjolnir, symbol of Thor, and is worn to protect against evil spirits. It is not magical.

Chief Noatun immediately asks the PCs if they have brought his medicine. Grabbing the box, he immediately departs, leaving his son to tend to the newcomers. If the PCs ask about the chief or even talk among themselves within Ian's hearing, the young tribesman relates the following story:

"My father has been in great pain for many nights. We fear that he might die. The medicine you brought should help relieve the terrible nightmares he has been having and bring stability back to our village. He talks of nothing but death these days—his own—and I hope Frey will answer our prayers and cure him.

"For now, you must not worry. You have helped and are our honored guests. The storm, I fear, will continue throughout the night. If it does, the entire tribe will feast together this evening. We shall exchange tales of war with our new friends and give our thanks to Frey for our many blessings. You are most welcome to join us."

With those words, Ian departs to aid in his father's treatment. The party is left to eat, sleep, and drink until the gathering.

Later that night, the tribesmen and their families slowly gather within the hall. Chief Noatun looks very relaxed, and the entire tribe appears relieved at his improved health. An atmosphere of warmth, friendship, and good cheer pervades the room while the blizzard rages outside, apparently unnoticed. Piles of food and drink are thrust upon the revelers, and most are gorged and drunk before the evening is over.

Much later, the leavings are fed to the dogs and the fire is allowed to die down to glowing embers. All those within the hall bundle themselves and their loved ones up in their furs and each other. Once everyone is settled in, the adventurers are asked to tell the first tale of a battle hard fought or comrades long gone.

The chieftain tells the final tale sometime around midnight. As he walks around the hearth while telling his story, pausing often for dramatic effect, the chieftain's tale is punctuated by the oohs and aahs of the villagers.

"We have guests here tonight," Noatun begins, "and in honor of them I shall tell our greatest tale. It is a long and bloody history we have, and we have achieved peace with our ancient enemies, the giants, only through the bravery of heroes like Rognvald Giant-Slayer. My great ancestor led those heroes to everlasting glory against the dread Mok-Turoknin and his evil giants of frost, now five centuries ago.

"Yes, children, the greatest of the lords of frost was Mok-Turoknin. He spoke, and the mountains trembled. He walked, and the ground shook beneath his feet. He fought, and the snow ran red with the blood of our greatest warriors. The bloody axe of Mok-Turoknin sang its black song of death, and we were powerless to stop it. The final days were upon us, and the lords of frost had won.

"Then was found a sword of death to answer Mok-Turoknin's call. Rognvald Giant-Slayer wielded Thorgrim, 'Thor's Fury,' which he had found at the very edge of the world. With renewed hope, the last band of heroes, numbering no more than a hundred, set forth to hunt down the King of Giants. They vowed to turn the tables on their hunter.

"Yet the battle was costly, and we sing many a song that remembers the names of those who were lost. Mok-Turoknin was not as foolish a beast as he had led the hunters to believe. No, he covered his tracks well and left guards and traps to weaken the bold warriors. Fully half the heroic band never reached the great doors in the wall of ice, and many more were grievously wounded. However, hope still shone brightly, as Thorgrim had proved true, quenching its thirst upon giant blood, and Rognvald had barely a scar to show for it.

"They reached the ice wall at fall of night and blew their horns loud and strong, challenging the devils within. No answer was heard. The silence lasted for many moments, and the foolhardy warriors, feeling that the giants had retreated into the mountains in fear, dropped their guard. Many proud warriors began to climb the wall's icy surface. The most agile led the way, while Rognvald thought deeply on the strange turn of events and inspected the huge set of icy doors before him.

"Suddenly an answering call from the giants was heard, not from afar but from the very top of the giant wall above them. Boulders by the thousands rained upon the heads of those helpless climbers, and all were slain in the space of a moment. Rognvald alone stood at the bottom of the great wall, protected by the space of the doorway. The laughter of the treacherous giants fired his now-boiling blood, and even the very walls could not hold his charge. The lone survivor, blessed with the strength of Magni himself, forced the immense doors open when an army of men could not have done so before.

"Lo and behold, children, who do you think watched with disbelief as the gigantic doors gave way before his very eyes? Why, Mok-Turoknin himself stood behind those walls, guiding the ambush from apparent safety. He greeted Rognvald with the rage of a giant lord of old. Two kings met, and none could interfere. The forces of Rognvald lay dead upon the snow, while the giants of Mok-Turoknin could only watch from above, too afraid to hurl their boulders in the vicinity of their king and too far away to aid in the glorious battle to come.

"The furious battle raged on for three days and nights with no clear victor. Rognvald stood alone in single combat with Mok-Turoknin, surrounded by a ring of frost giants who witnessed the contest of kings and were honor-bound not to interfere. Beneath a full moon, both were nigh upon death, their wounds deep and grievous. Blood poured from the many wounds in Rognvald, while a few deep blows in the blue flesh of the giant king attested to the skill of Thorgrim and the hand that wielded it. The ground was slippery with icy blood, and it was this simple fact that proved to be giant's undoing.

"Slipping on the ice beneath his feet, Mok-Turoknin swung too hard for his mark and landed on his knees in front of the warrior. Before he could rise again, the blood-red blade of Thorgrim sank deep into his skull, catching bone, blood, and eye. Even the giant's helm could not turn the fateful blow. The remaining giants growled in anger as Mok-Turoknin fell to the ground, and Rognvald's fate was sealed.

"Rognvald cried out to Odin, thanking him for glorious victory, but the battle was not over. Not a man has lived who could defeat 20 furious giants alone, and Rognvald was deeply wounded and surrounded on all sides by the remaining warriors of Mok-Turoknin. It could have been a hundred for all it mattered, for his doom was certain.

"Thorgrim spurred the weary battle-lord into a final screaming frenzy, and before it was done, fully a dozen giants lay cold at their master's side. Even unto his last dying breath, Rognvald Giant-Slayer cheered for his people and their final victory over the giants, and it is said that a hundred Valkyries took his soul to Valhalla, singing many songs in honor of his deeds.

"The last few followers of Mok-Turoknin took both Thorgrim and their lord's body into the rocky pass behind the ice wall, leaving the bodies of the slain to the wolves and the winds. Little did they know that one of the fallen had survived the attack, not slain but only crippled from the pain. With his legs broken from his fall from the wall, Vandrad Tale-Teller watched the battle, powerless to help himself or Rognvald. After the battle, he crawled for weeks over the Vigrid plains, fooling the wolves into thinking he was but carrion upon the field and then slaying them with his bare hands and his broken sword when they strayed too close. It is he who is remembered for telling the tale I have told you. Lest you forget, Vandrad died upon the completion of this account and walked proudly over Bifrost bridge, joining the other brave warriors in Valhalla.

"Thus ended the great reign of Mok-Turoknin. The giants have dared not venture past the great wall, and the land is free and good again. We remember our heroic ancestors and their valiant sacrifice on cold nights like this."

At the moment Noatun's voice falls silent, the sound of heavy footfalls is heard outside the hall. Before anyone can act, the main doors burst open and the biting winds quickly blow out all the torches in the hall. Only the dull red light of the hearth illuminates the now-freezing chamber.

Standing in the doorway is the pale blue luminescent form of a giant. Armored in shimmering scales and bleeding from the head, chest, and legs, it moves slowly into the hall. The 15'-tall being strides directly toward Chief Noatun. Dozens of swords and spears from valiant men lash out at the ghostly form, but they pass through with no effect. Temporarily paralyzed with fear, Noatun faces the horrible apparition and forcefully presents the amulet from around his neck to the giant.

"Be gone from here, ancient devil! I am protected from your curse! Mok-Turoknin, return to your grave!" The giant king pauses for a moment as if held by the bold words, then he grins. The ghostly presence raises a bleeding axe high into the air—and slams it down through the strong chest of Chief Noatun. A broad smile crosses the bloodied visage of the giant as he glances menacingly around the room, then he slowly disappears, laughing as he fades away on the ice-cold winds. Only the lifeless form of Noatun remains to show that the giant was ever here.

You should not ignore the pleas of party members to join in the fray when Mok-Turoknin appears. Since the PCs must draw their weapons and get into position to fight the huge ghost, they have only one chance to help out.

The party should immediately realize that the ghost can't be affected by non-magical weapons (see area 24 for more on Mok-Turoknin's ghost), and since the tribesmen are very superstitious about magic, the PCs might have some serious explaining to do if they manage to engage the giant's ghost with glowing weapons. Even if the PCs do score some damage on the giant king, Mok-Turoknin still kills Noatun, but he flashes a menacing smile at the offending party members before he disappears. All damage inflicted on Mok-Turoknin by the party during this appearance of the ghost will be completely healed by the time the PCs reach the frost giants' mountain keep.

When everything calms down and the lights are restored, Ian takes charge, ordering his men to search the village for the giant. Chief Noatun is stone dead, but from no apparent cause. A PC with the healing proficiency (or a cleric) can determine that a heart attack was the probable cause of death.

The rest of the night goes by uneventfully, and the tribe rests uneasily. In the morning, the storm lifts, and Chief Noatun is placed in a wooden boat that is set afire and allowed to float out into the lake.

Later that day, Ian informs the PCs that his scouts report no tracks made either last night or today. He can only blame the "evil spirit of Mok-Turoknin" for his father's death. The scouts also report that the snowfall was much heavier than they first believed (unusually heavy for this time of year), and the route back to Dagmalstad will be impassable for at least the next few weeks. The PCs are, therefore, invited to stay as guests of the new chief, Ian, until the pass clears.

If any party member asks Ian about the curse his father mentioned before his death, Ian tells the following tale:

"It is said that before Mok-Turoknin met his doom so long ago, he had already prepared his tomb somewhere in the giants' ancestral keep high in the frosted mountains to the east. He boasted many times about a

terrible curse that would destroy any who dared disturb his eternal rest.

"Now, the old women in the village say that Mok-Turoknin has returned to seek vengeance on the descendants of those who sent him to his grave. I do not know which of these rumors are true, if any. If the giant king's rest has been disturbed by somebody or something, then I fear I will be the next to die. I had troubling dreams last night, like my father's in the early days of his illness. Whether they have risen from the horrible events of last night, or whether they are my own premonitions of death, I again cannot answer. I doubt it is mere chance that my father and I are the last surviving descendants of Rognvald. Most of the other men in that fateful band were the last remaining youths of the town. Having seen their fathers and grandfathers die before them, they had no heirs.

"The next full moon is in one month, and since both Mok-Turoknin and my father died under this omen, I am assuming the worst will occur then. Fortunately, I have neither wife nor heir, so the giant's curse will run its course with me. Mok-Turoknin will have his last laugh after all."

The PCs should decide to help Ian just because he is a friend in need, but if they are reticent, you might remind them that the sword Thorgrim was also taken with Mok-Turoknin. Perhaps the treasures of a giant's tomb will spur them to action.

Assuming the PCs offer to help Ian, they need to know the following things:
—The wall referred to in the tale is a gigantic ice-covered stone wall constructed across a mountain pass to the east. Beyond the wall lie the ancient lands of the frost giants. No one has a map to the wall, since the villagers have no desire to travel so close to the "accursed lands."
—The villagers have no idea what is behind the wall or where the legendary keep is located, if it exists at all. The PCs can best find the wall by traveling east until they reach the mountains, then following them north to the wall.
—If Mok-Turoknin's bones have been disturbed, they must be returned to their normal state, not destroyed. Even then, it is doubtful that this will remove the curse.
—Thorgrim is a wide-bladed sword capable of being wielded in one or two hands. A knowledgeable fighter will be able to discern that "Thor's Fury" is probably a bastard sword.
—The PCs have about one month before the next appearance of Mok-Turoknin's ghost (at the next full moon).

The town has 2-5 mastodons in the pen (not including the four in the pass if the party managed to lead them here). Each of these "all-terrain vehicles" is for sale at only 2,000 gp. Since the party is not expected to return from their journey into the wasteland, the valuable beasts will not be loaned. If a PC has a spare nonweapon proficiency slot, mastodon riding can be learned in 3-6 days. Otherwise, you should penalize the PCs heavily if they try to ride these beasts. Horses might be better, if the party had the foresight to bring them (there are none for sale in Drinidok).

All normal arctic adventuring supplies and furs are available in the town, in limited amounts, but no armor (except leather and furs) or weapons (except spears) are for sale. Under no circumstances will any tribesmen, even Ian, accompany the party. They are much too superstitious to venture into the lands of the giants.

E. The Vigrid Plains.

The howling winds whip the icy snow along the frozen tundra of the Vigrid Plains. The sight is like an endless dustbowl or desert, only very cold. Even during this warmest part of the year, only a few patches of green have managed to force their way to the surface. The land still looks cold, desolate, and uninviting.

Vigrid means "Battle-Shaker" to these people, and the plains are the legendary location of epic battles between the giants and the tribesmen. Few signs remain of these ancient wars, only the occasional boulder or crumbling cairn of rocks. None of these contain any treasure or remains, which have been removed over the ages by wolves and other scavengers.

You should begin to make it tough for the PCs, with foul weather, food shortages, and rough terrain, especially if they've had it easy up to now. Without proper provisions or hunting proficiencies, the party will never reach the keep alive and in time. There are herd animals to catch (if the PCs are lucky enough to encounter big game) and snowshoe hares (more likely to be found). The chance that the party will become lost in the snowy wind storms should also not be overlooked (see the 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*, pages 127-128, and *WSG*, pages 50-60).

The current temperature is around 30-50°F. There is no real night or day in the "land of the midnight sun," just eternal twilight at this time of year.

Check for random encounters once during the day and once at night. Encounters occur on a roll of 1 on 1d6. If an encounter is indicated, roll 1d12 or chose from the following list.

1: **Tribesmen** (11-20 zero-level humans, encountered only within three hexes of area D; reroll elsewhere). These hunters will not travel with the party (see area A encounters) and are always friendly.
2: **Devil dogs** (4-16): AC 6; MV 30 maximum; HD 6; hp 30 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA throat attack; AL CE; FF/26. These vicious creatures hide in the snow and attack to surprise when the party gets close enough. The wandering pack has no treasure.
3: **Caribou** (20-200): These are described in area A encounters.
4: **Wooly mammoth:** AC 5; MV 12; HD 13; hp 104; THAC0 7; #AT 5; Dmg 3-18/3-18/2-16/2-12/2-12; ML 7; AL N; MC (elephant). This impressive and dangerous creature is casually grazing on the few patches of grass on the tundra. Though usually aggressive, it will not attack the party if it is left alone. This beast has been unsuccessfully attacked by ogres, gnolls, and other humanoids, and will not tolerate any interruption of its meal.
5: **Ogres** (2-12): AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 27 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10 or by weapon type; ML 11; AL CE; MC. This is a hunting party from the southern mountains. These ogres belong to one of the most powerful of the humanoid races roaming the plains. There is a 25% chance that they are severely wounded (all hit points at 10-60% of maximum) due to an unsuccessful assault on a wooly mammoth (see above). In this case, the ogres are returning to their homes in the south. Their treasure

consists of 200 gp each worth of skins and pelts rather than gold or magic.

6: **Giant constrictor snakes** (1-2): AC 5; MV 9; HD 6+1; hp 37, 30; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1-4/2-8; SA constriction; ML 9; AL N; MC. These furry creatures prefer to attack sleeping PCs only. They have no treasure.

7: **Winter wolves** (2-7): AC 5; MV 18; HD 6; hp 30 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA frost; ML 13; AL NE; MC (wolf). The scourge of the plains, these wolves attack anything and everything but prefer to attack camped humanoids. They are guarding the remains of a warrior from Drinidok who wore *leather armor +1* and carried one 250-gp ruby.

8: **Wolves** (3-30): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 10 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; ML 10; AL N; MC. These starving wolves are more likely to attack (−10% to reaction rolls) than other wolf packs (see area A pass encounters).

9: **Quaggoths** (2-24): AC 6; MV 12; HD 1+2; hp 7 each; THAC0 19; #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1-4/1-4 or by weapon type; SA berserk fighting; SD immune to poison; AL N; FF/74. These creatures are considered to be the orcs of the arctic. They are widespread and rumored to have a large settlement in the southeast mountains. They have seen the great ice wall to the north but have a taboo against going there. All quaggoths fear the legendary giants, whom they believe still roam the eastern mountains.

10: **Ice trolls** (1-6): AC 8; MV 9; HD 2; hp 14 each; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8/1-8; SD regeneration, impervious to cold, magical weapons to hit; AL CE; FF/90. These heartless cousins of normal trolls are in search of something to kill. Though not very smart, they are cunning and will follow the PCs if possible, attacking when the party is most vulnerable (perhaps after a heavy battle with other encountered monsters). Each ice troll carries 50 gp in gems, trinkets, and coins.

11: **Polar bears** (1-3): AC 6; MV 12, Sw 9; HD 8+8; hp 72, 65, 53; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1-10/1-10/2-12; SA hug for 3-18 hp damage; ML 10; AL N; MC (bear). There is a 25% chance that the bears will attack, believing that the party is infringing on their territory.

12: **Ice toads** (1-4): AC 4; MV 9, hop 9; HD 5; hp 30 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; SA radiate cold for 3-18 hp damage; ML 11; AL N; MC (toad, giant). These strange creatures are just sitting around, waiting for someone to step on them.

F. The Great Ice Wall.

> Far ahead, you notice that the rough mountain slopes give way to a huge stone wall. Over 75′ high and covered in layer upon layer of hard, clear ice, the wall is as majestic as it is ominous. When you reach the midpoint of the massive wall, you can see that it stretches fully 10 miles in either direction and must have required engineering on an impossible scale.
>
> Directly in front of you is the only entrance. Two gigantic stone doors, each 30′ wide and 50′ tall, are frozen solid in ice. Hundreds of large round boulders dot the landscape as far as the eye can see. There appears to be no other way to get past the wall.

The giant doors are frozen shut and require a total of 200 points of strength to push open. Mastodons have 25 strength points and war horses have 19 points. Any PC with 18/01 or greater strength should also be considered to have a 19 strength for purposes of forcing the door open. If six turns are spent searching for scrub brush and wood, the party can build a bonfire capable of melting away enough of the ice to free one door in 3-12 turns. It will then require only 100 total points of strength to force the door open.

When opened, the door slowly creaks and moans as ice and stone scrape the ground and ancient hinges break free. A blast of ice-cold air rushes down the pass, through the opening, and across the party, blowing away small objects and extinguishing torches.

The party can also attempt to scale the sheer, ice-covered wall. All party members, including thieves, should be penalized due to the strong winds, icy surfaces, and vertical walls with no ledges. At this PC level, it is nearly impossible to scale the wall without magic or a grappling hook and a long rope. (See the 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook,* pages 123-124.)

The wall is 25′ thick. A 10′-wide walkway sunk 5′ below the top of the wall runs along its entire 20-mile length. Stone stairways are located along the inside of the wall at one-mile intervals. Piles of boulders are positioned every 100′ along the walkway. No bones or treasure are to be found anywhere along the top of the wall or on the ground below.

If the players examine the backs of the giant doors, they find the remains of a massive metal bar, broken in two. The bar was in place when Rognvald forced open the doors, and the two halves have remained frozen in their brackets ever since. When the remaining frost giants left here long ago (see "The Mountain Keep of Mok-Turoknin"), they closed the doors behind them but were unable to replace the bar from the other side.

G. Battle Axe Pass.

> As you pass through the huge open door, you notice steep mountain slopes rising to the north and south. The ground beyond the wall is covered in snow, rising ahead of you into an ancient glacier that fills the pass far into the distance. Apparently there is only one way into the land of frost: straight ahead over the ice.

This region of the mountains is geologically new and therefore very steep and treacherous. The last remains of a glacier that once filled this entire land lie in the bottom of the pass. This glacier fills a region that looks like a giant double-bladed axe if viewed from above. This phenomenon was created by the frost giant god Thrym long ago, before the giants abandoned the region.

Battle Axe Pass is a windy, desolate place where the snow never melts. Centuries ago, the giants drove out or slew most of the larger inhabitants of the region, and the smaller animals fled to the plains. The few creatures that have remained and can survive here have taken refuge in the abandoned frost giant keep. There are no random encounters in the pass, and no game can be located by the party. The PCs must search the freezing glacier on their own, returning to the plains for food and rest if necessary.

The glacier that the PCs must traverse is unstable and very dangerous. They might not have much to fear from creatures, because even lower animals are smart enough to avoid walking here.

The glacier is treated as a slippery

horizontal surface for movement purposes (see the *WSG,* page 39). The winds constantly whip through this region from east to west at 31-45 MPH. Since the temperature is below freezing (21-30°F) at this time of year, the wind-chill brings the effective temperature to as low as −30°F. The wind and cold reduce the party's visibility and movement rate to two-thirds normal. The weather could also mean the death of improperly prepared animals or their masters.

There is a 10% chance per day that the PCs will accidentally cross over a 4'-12' wide crack that has recently frozen over. Any weight over 50 lbs. will break through and fall into a virtually bottomless ravine. If the PCs state that they are probing ahead, they automatically discover any such pitfalls. How they cross them is their own business. See the rules on roping characters together (*WSG,* pages 36-38) should the PCs realize the value of such precautions.

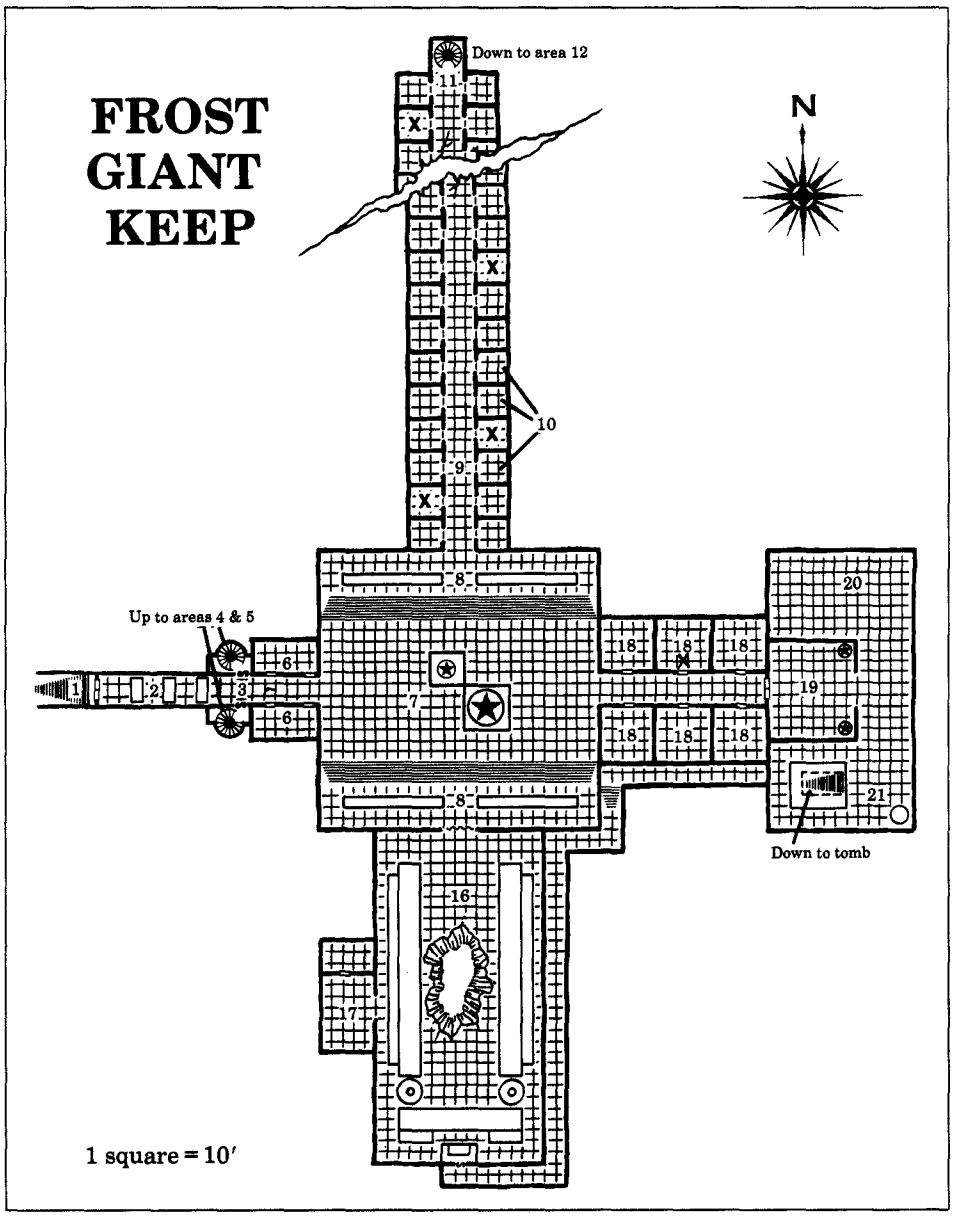
To maintain the proper atmosphere, always emphasize the hostile environment, the lack of any life whatsoever, and the eerie sounds generated by the cold and deadly winds.

The Mountain Keep of Mok-Turoknin

This keep, so high in the frozen mountains, was once the home of an entire army of frost giants led by the strongest giant of them all: Mok-Turoknin. From here, the pass was impregnable and the giants unstoppable. Only after years of feuding with the humans was Mok-Turoknin slain and the last of his followers driven from their ancestral home.

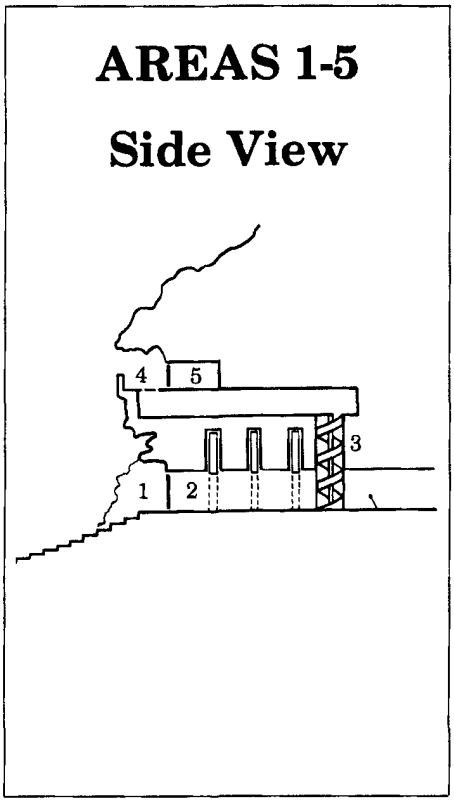
Before he died, Mok-Turoknin prepared a secret tomb that he used as his private treasure vault. With the help of the frost giant god Thrym, a *curse* was placed upon the tomb: Anyone who dared to violate Mok-Turoknin's remains would be slain by the vengeful ghost of the giant king, as would all the trespasser's descendants. No force on Earth can save such a raider from his fate, but a *wish* or similar magic will negate the effects of the *curse.*

The tomb of the great lord of the frost giants remained undisturbed for 500 years before Mok-Turoknin was awakened, not by looters but by an earthquake. The recent seismic activity in the region (mentioned earlier by the tribesmen) has shaken the fortress and caused many changes within. Monsters have broken into the keep and are foraging for food and treasure. Also, Mok-Turoknin's fabled axe has fallen from his grasp. Since no person has caused this disturbance, Mok-Turoknin's spirit has returned to take vengeance on the only living enemies he has, the descendants of Rognvald.



When the giant's ghost returned, Chief Noatun's nightmares became worse and worse until his eventual murder. With Mok-Turoknin's rage now sated with blood, the son of Noatun is relatively safe. However, Mok-Turoknin's ghost will remain active as long as even one of Rognvald's descendants is alive. One month after his father's death, Ian will succumb to the same fate unless the party restores Mok-Turoknin's axe to its proper place. At their level, the PCs cannot possibly defeat Mok-Turoknin's ghost, nor turn it (see area 24 for statistics), so restoring the tomb is their only way to save Ian.

The rest of the story after Mok-Turoknin's death is short but interesting, and the party will be able to piece it together after thoroughly exploring the keep. Four giant warriors survived that final battle: one lieutenant and four regular soldiers. They carried the



body of their leader and the weapon of his destruction back to the keep, where the women and children awaited news of the battle.

With much ceremony and secrecy, the giant king was laid to rest in his treasure vault with his famous axe in his grip. Rognvald's sword was sealed in the tomb as well for safekeeping, for the giants believed that if the chamber was disturbed, the violators would be slain by their king's avenging ghost and could not ever use the sword against giantkind again. They did not realize that the *curse* extended only to the remains of Mok-Turoknin and his belongings, not to his surroundings.

Along with Mok-Turoknin and Thorgrim were buried the giant king's concubines, his hunting wolves, and the few human tribesmen held in captivity in the keep's dungeons. The giantesses and wolves were put to death with poison as part of the burial traditions of frost giant royalty, while the barbarians were buried alive as punishment for their crimes against the giants.

The remaining giant men, women, and children packed up as much as they could (mostly provisions for the long journey) and traveled east over the mountains to where they hoped to find more frost giants. The entire band of refugees died of starvation in the desolate lands to the east, never to be heard from again. The little treasure they took with them now lines the dens of monsters for miles around.

The construction of the keep, inside and out, is massive in scale even for frost giants, and you may wish to use it as a living giant fortress in other campaigns (or in another time; see "Concluding the Adventure" and "Further Adventures"). The PCs will have to climb onto tables or walk under them, etc. Most of the rooms are undisturbed, and the cold has preserved things much as they were 500 years ago. The cold vastness of the keep should be emphasized at every turn.

There are two entrances to the keep that the PCs can use. The stairs leading up (area 1) are climbable, and the doors at the top can be opened with some effort (thanks to the earthquake). The party can also reach the upper battlements (area 4) with ropes or by flying and use the stairwells there to reach the inside of the keep. In either case, getting out is just as difficult as getting in.

1. The Stone Stairs.

> In the distance, you can dimly see gigantic stone stairs rising high into the eastern slopes. As you approach, you can see that each step is over 3' tall, 30' wide, ice-covered, and layered in years of snow. The bottom of the stairs is covered in blocks of broken ice and snow.

This flight of gigantic steps leads directly to the ancient keep of Mok-Turoknin, some 300' above the level of the glacier. The party must take care in climbing the 100 steps leading to the doors, since the steps are icy and slippery (treat as a slippery sloping wall). Mountaineering skills are recommended. The stairs are very strong (being carved out of the living rock) and will not collapse.

> Reaching the top of your climb, you can see nothing but snow and ice before you. A gigantic mountain ledge overhangs dangerously above your heads.

Behind the snow and ice is a huge pair of iron doors that open into area 2. It will require 20-50 man-hours to clear the ice and snow from in front of the doors. Magical or normal fires continuously lit will cut the time in half, but no one can then pick at the ice unless protected from the flames. A *fireball* spell will remove only one hour of work from the task, since the ice melted by the spell's flash of heat is quickly refrozen by the biting cold. Fortunately for the party, much of the ice was already broken free during the earthquake and is deposited at the bottom of the stairs.

When the PCs have succeeded in removing the ice, read the following:

> The huge black iron doors are each 25' tall and 15' wide. Each door has a large, white, iron dragon head mounted in its center. Ancient runes cover both doors.

The dragon heads are harmless knockers (pulling a dragon under its chin and then releasing bangs the head against the door) and each is 12' above the ground. The runes say only what the party already knows: "This is the home of the frost giants and our king is Mok-Turoknin." Any PC foolish enough to bang the knockers will alert the entire place to the party's presence, eliminating any chance of surprise.

The iron hinges of the huge doors have rusted over the years. Characters with a total of 30 or more strength points must push against a door in order to open it. Because the doors are huge, as many as eight people may push against a door.

The ledge above the door is actually the underside of area 4, some 50' above. The PCs can use grappling hooks, potions of *flying* (if careful with the heavy winds), a thief's wall-climbing skill, or any other means to reach the ledge. Thieves must scale rough rock ledges and sheer icy stone to reach the top.

There are no random monster encounters within the keep. However, you should roll 1d6 each turn. A 1 on the die indicates a strange encounter.

The spirits are strong within the ancient walls, and the presence of the party, the earth tremors, and other monsters have awakened long-dead beings from their eternal rest. These are merely harmless varieties of haunts, called "restless spirits" by some. They can neither attack nor be attacked, and appear only when there is

a psychic disturbance that needs correcting. As soon as Mok-Turoknin is returned to his eternal rest, the spirits will sleep again.

Roll randomly or choose which room in the keep has been disturbed. Then, if the PCs are within hearing range, you should begin to "haunt" the room. For example, the PCs might see invisible giants rolling over in their sleep in the private quarters or hear the sounds of tortured prisoners, children playing, or the giants eating dinner. None of these encounters are dangerous, but some might be humorous or confusing to the party. They might also provide the party with clues about the former uses of the abandoned chambers. You can also invent encounters with these spirits to give the party clues, depending on how the adventure is going. For example, if the PCs are having trouble finding the secret tomb entrance (at area 21), the sounds of a loud creaking hinge accompanied by heavy grunts and the clinking of thick chains might clue them in.

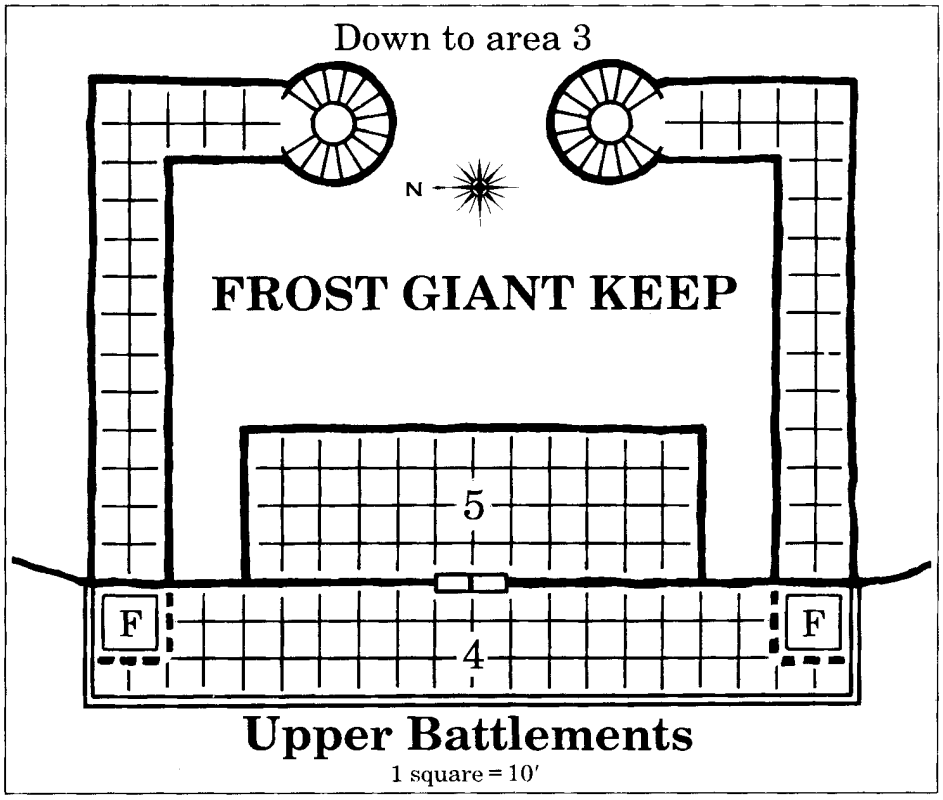
2. Long Entryway.

> The huge doors open into a wide stone corridor 25′ tall and 30′ wide. Your light reveals thousands of crystalline filaments filling the hallway as far as the eye can see. A large bar of black iron stands upright against the northern wall. The corridor walls are of smooth, undressed stone, and a faint blue light can be seen far in the distance.

As the PCs enter the keep, the wind will not disrupt the crystal webs, but the spiders in area 7 will be alerted to their presence. The black iron bar could not be set in the door, since the giants left no one alive within. There is no light in the corridor, but small bowls are mounted high upon the walls. These bowls normally held some of the "burning ice" from area 16. The ice has long since burned out.

There are no trap activation devices in the corridor, although there is a trap mechanism of sorts. If the lever in area 3 ahead is pulled, three stone walls drop down into the passageway. These will trap intruders inside or outside the keep, or within the spaces between the walls.

Each wall requires a bend bars/lift gates roll (at −10%) to lift (only one try per person per wall). If the PCs choose

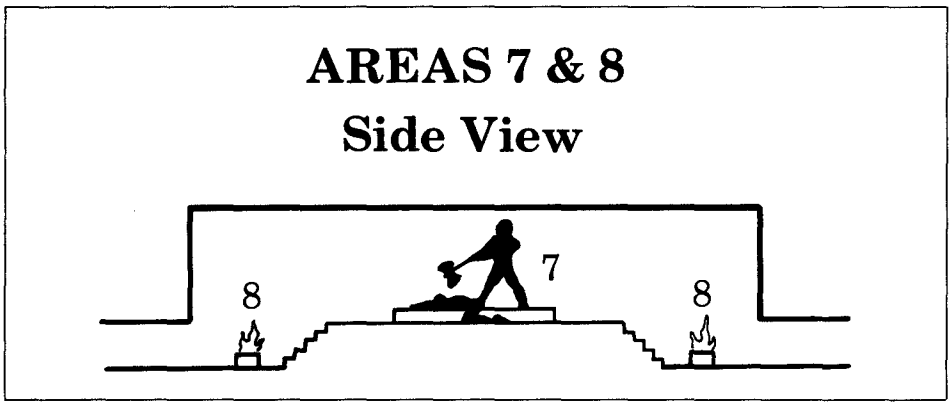


to combine their efforts into one roll, summing all of their bend bars/lift gates percentages, apply the −10% penalty to this total, not to each individual. The PCs get only one chance, however, and they must all manage to get to the other side before the wall falls down again. Anyone who fails a dexterity check on 1d20 while trying to slip under a falling wall will be crushed for 6d6 hp damage (no saving throw). A successful roll to detect sliding walls, unsafe walls, or mechanical traps (performed by a dwarf, gnome, or thief, respectively) reveals the presence of the moving walls but not the tripping mechanism. Stone furniture or similarly strong items can be used to support a wall if the items first makes successful saving throws vs. crushing blow.

3. Secret Stairs to Battlements. There are two rotating secret doors here that can be detected by any normal means. Once the doors are opened, a set of stone stairs and a passage that lead to the battlements (area 4) are revealed. The north stairs are clear and covered at the top by a wooden trapdoor. The south stairwell and passage, however, are filled with snow and ice, and require 10-40 man-hours to clear. It will probably be impossible to keep a fire going strong enough to melt it all away, since from above the heat will have little effect, while from below the melting ice will continually extinguish the flames.

In the main passage, just beyond the secret doors, is a large stone lever in the floor. It is currently tilted to the west. If pulled to the east, three stone walls drop into the corridor at area 2. These walls cannot be raised by returning the lever to its original position. However, returning the lever to its east position allows a physically raised stone wall to catch in place again once it reaches the ceiling. Since the PCs are unlikely to be capable of raising the walls 25′ into the air (even the giants needed ladders), they will have to spend a round or two getting past each door on their way through the corridor if anyone is foolish enough to tamper with the lever.

4. Upper Level Battlements. This ledge was the first defense against attackers. Anyone near the stairs (area 1) or the doorway can be bombarded by up to 20 boulder-throwing frost giants at a



time. A supply of rocks is on hand along the edges of the parapet, as well as in a storage room to the east (area 5).

The battlements are covered in snow and ice, and two trapdoors (with stone ladders below) lead down to a passage and the stairs of area 3. The southern trapdoor has broken under the weight of snow and ice, and the forces of the earthquake. It is through here that the spiders and the yeti entered (at different times). More snow has fallen since then, and some of the debris has been blown into the hole. See area 3 for more on clearing the way.

Because of the winds and constant snowfall, the trapdoors (already secret in design) are concealed from view, as are any tracks made by earlier intruders. The PCs must clear away the snow to even get a chance to find the trapdoor covering the northern exit, or they may accidentally walk into the open hole of the southern exit (taking 3d6 hp damage in the 25′ fall). The double doors to the east are obvious and lead to area 5.

The ledge is also a haven for a flock of snobats. These bats are a never-before encountered arctic variety of mobat and are camouflaged well by their white skin and pale-blue, luminescent eyes. Since these bats hang upside down from the overhang, they are virtually indistinguishable from any of the numerous large icicles hanging there. The snobats attack as soon as three or more PCs enter the ledge area or if any loud sound is made.

Snobats (7-12): AC 7 (variable); MV 3, Fl 15 (C); HD 5; hp 30 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA painful screech, surprise bonus; SD camouflage; ML 12; AL NE; MC (bat). The snobats have no treasure.

5. Upper Storeroom. This is a large storeroom filled with boulders and empty storage vats (formerly filled with burning ice to dump on invaders).

If the party is unusually powerful or is getting bored, you can insert an ice lizard here. The reptile has covered the doorway with snow, and any disturbance will alert it to the arrival of company. It uses its ability to change into a white dragon in order to bluff the PCs into giving up their treasure in exchange for their lives. Since the ice lizard is a formidable foe in its own right, this charade is not too cruel a trick. The ice lizard has no treasure because the PCs are the first to enter its lair. It has no idea what's inside the keep—or even that it has an inside.

Ice lizard: AC 1; MV 9, Fl 15 (C or E); HD 3+3; hp 27; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-3/1-3; SA spells, breath weapon; SD *polymorphs* into white dragon, 80% magic resistance; ML 10; AL CE; FF/52.

The PCs may use this chamber as a safe place to regain spells and hit points, should they be forced to retreat from other areas of the keep. If this occurs, you can add more of the same monsters found in the keep when the PCs return inside.

6. Armor and Weapon Stores. These two rooms are almost empty, their contents exhausted in the ancient wars or taken by the remaining giants when they abandoned the keep. The doors to each of these rooms were locked with a key found only in the tomb (area 22).

The northern room contains seven stone spears (15′ long) with iron heads, three stone clubs (8′ long), and a pile of 11 boulders, all sized for frost giants.

The room to the south contains three sets of giant-size leather armor (thick furs), two helmets (one is dented), one shield, and a mangled set of blood-stained chain mail. The mail was worn in the final battle by the last surviving giant lieutenant, who then exchanged his ruined set for a new one before abandoning the keep. There is nothing else of value in these rooms.

7. The Statue of Thrym.

This massive chamber is lit with a dull blue flickering glow that comes from four magnificent blue fires burning to the south and north, down flights of gigantic stairs. In the center of the grand hall is a huge pair of stone statues standing over four stories tall. Each statue is roughly cut, with squared-off features and sharp corners. One of these is of a great bearded frost giant who is bringing his mighty double-bladed axe down upon the head of a slumping, bearded man. Gushing from the rended neck and head of the Norseman is a fountain of red blood, which falls into a waiting pool. A smaller pool fills with the blood pouring from the mouth of the dying man, who is vainly reaching for a large hammer in the center of the pool. Framing the hideous scene is a massive crystalline spider's web joining the ceiling to the floor of this majestic chamber.

The moment they enter the room, the PCs are attacked by 2-5 giant spiders that drop down on them from above the entrance. The ceiling hides the rest of the eight giant spiders in the room, which will aid their comrades if the party is doing too well.

Giant spiders (8): AC 4; MV 3, Wb 12; HD 4+4; hp 24 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA poison; ML 13; AL CE; MC.

The spiders' treasure is at the center of the ceiling webs. It can be reached by climbing the statues to the top, then cutting the web from below. An adventurous thief can also safely climb the large web if so inclined. Most of the falling treasure will land in the pools, and none of it will be damaged by the fall. Flying and magical devices will also allow access to the treasure.

The treasure in the upper webs includes the cocooned body of a dead yeti (not very valuable except to a collector or a physician), 15 spider eggs (again of little value), five gems (worth 100, 125,

150, 250, and 300 gp), and 12 iron shields inlaid with silver (worth 1,000 sp each) that used to be mounted on the chamber walls.

The walls here and in area 8 are decorated with carvings that tell the tales of the frost giant god Thrym and the journeys of his "children." You may also slip in some little-known Asgardian lore for atmosphere. The carvings consist of pictographs with accompanying texts.

Similar runes with pictures engraved along the base of the pools indicate that the two beings in dispute are Thrym and Thor, Norse god of thunder. The statue represents one of the great fantasies of giantkind, the death of Thor. It is ironic that this is the exact manner by which Mok-Turoknin met his end, but with the positions reversed. The statues are nonmagical, and the weakly magical fountain continuously spills red-colored water (kept from freezing by magic) into the pool.

An archway leads to the east, while broad sets of stairs lead down into the side alcoves (area 8). The blue fires there keep the entire chamber lit and should be more fully described to the PCs when they enter those areas.

8. Burning Ice Alcoves.

> The giant steps lead down into a mist-filled depression in the floor of the great hall. The dull blue light is coming from two large pits in the floor of the depression. The flames burn cold, and the light fog lying along the floors appears to originate here as well.

The flames are from a rare type of ice (found only deep inside glaciers) known as "burning ice." It is blue and burns cold instead of hot. This ice does the same amount of damage as a regular oil fire, although it causes frostbite instead of blisters. The four hearths (two per alcove) are connected directly to a large deposit of the ice that will continue to burn for centuries to come. The hearth-pit in area 16 is similarly equipped.

If a small amount of the blue ice is scooped up or grabbed by protected hands, it can be placed in any of the hundreds of sconcelike bowls around the keep. The light persists for as long as a torch, and the brightness of the light is similar, although white/blue instead of orange/red. The only difference between hot fires and burning ice is that heated smoke is lighter than air and rises, while cold smoke is heavier than air and sinks. The floor, therefore, is covered in a heavy, foggy vapor that makes walking tricky and can conceal obstacles.

An archway leads out of the northern alcove to area 9, and a chain-link curtain to the south leads to area 16.

9. The Endless Tunnel.

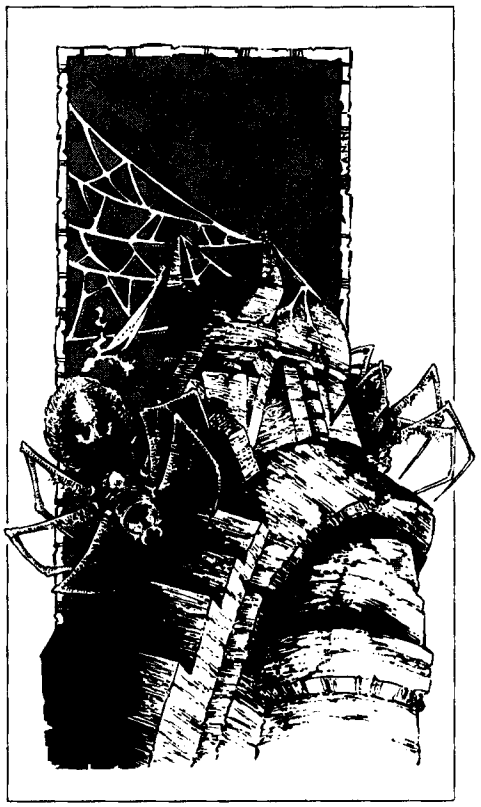
> The archway opens into a tunnel that continues far into the distance. Similar archways line both sides of the 30'-wide corridor. More webs and bluish fog blanket the floor of the dark passageway.

The passage may seem endless, but it eventually ends at a long flight of stairs to the north (area 11). Near these stairs, a giant crack in the rock developed during the last earthquake. It not difficult to see, since the fog continually flows down into the chasm. Running PCs should get an intelligence check on 1d20 to warn them. The bottom of the small ravine is about 200' below this level of the keep. The rift is not open to the sky.

Areas beyond the rift, including the passageway, sleeping rooms (area 10), and lower-level chambers (areas 12-15), are all tilted 30° counterclockwise (as you look north). The party may experience difficulty in exploring (or fighting) in these regions.

10. Living Quarters. Each of these 30' × 30' rooms was formerly the private living quarters of 1-5 giants. There is a 70% chance that a room contains only one large bed fur, indicating a single warrior's chamber. Otherwise, there are two furs (for a male and female adult) or more (for their children). Each couple had 0-3 children (1d4 − 1). As a matter of tradition, the male warrior's bed fur was always kept ready in the room, even if he had been killed in battle.

The treasure found in each of these rooms depends on the number and type of giants who lived there. Most of the best treasure was removed by the surviving giants when they left, but lack of space and the necessity to bring food and other provisions overrode material considerations, and many of the minor (mostly valueless) trinkets were left behind. To determine the contents of each room, roll 1d20 four times and consult the Adult Personal Effects Table



on page 66 for each adult; roll 1d6 once and consult the Child Personal Effects Table for each child. To save time, you can roll for all 28 rooms before play begins.

The rooms labelled with Xs have been cleared of all possessions, as these were the private chambers of the four surviving giant soldiers.

11. Spiral Stairs. This stone spiral staircase goes down to area 12. Note that the stairs, although undamaged, are tilted like the northernmost sections of areas 9 and 10. A lot of the bluish fog from the cold fires has sunk down these stairs to the lower level, and the stairs are completely clouded.

Areas 12-15 at the bottom of the stairs are tilted like the end of the tunnel and filled to the ceiling with the thick, bluish-white smoke from hundreds of years of burning ice. In these natural chambers, the walls are rough and unfinished. The PCs will probably have to feel their way around in here to go from place to place, since the fog reduces visibility to 1'.

12. Dungeon and Training Area. Along these walls are dozens of thin chains, only strong enough to hold human beings and their ilk. All of the giants' prisoners were either thrown to the remorhaz in area 16, placed in the larder, or used for combat training by young warriors.

In the center of the room, five mutilated corpses hang upside down from the ceiling. This is one of the more gruesome examples of the cruelty of the giants of old. The last remaining living prisoners held here were buried alive in Mok-Turoknin's tomb as a final punishment (see area 22).

A number of holes have recently been opened in the western section of the floor by a colony of 12 ice beetles. These are identical to fire beetles in all respects, except that their eyes derive luminosity from blue ice glands. The beetles usually feed elsewhere and have only recently discovered this chamber. They explored here and found nothing of interest, at least until the party arrives. The beetles are incredibly annoyed that they can't reach the suspended bodies above them (since the ceilings are slick with ice) and attack the party immediately using the fog for cover. The holes are also dangerous as pit traps (doing 3d6 hp damage per fall). The beetles have no treasure except for their blue ice glands.

Ice beetles (12): AC 4; MV 12; HD 1+2; hp 8 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; AL N; MM1/9.

13. The Dangerous Forge. The master weaponsmith and his apprentices were all slain in the giants' last battle with the humans. Because of this, some of the forge master's treasures remain hidden beneath his great anvil. The forge master was known to love traps, and none of the remaining giants (some still wounded) wished to poke around so dangerous a room.

The anvil is delicately balanced and can be turned about its center with a touch. However, there is a right way (clockwise) and a wrong way (counterclockwise) to reveal the compartment underneath. If the anvil is turned the wrong way, four huge boulders drop onto the unlucky PCs below (up to four targets within a 20′ × 20′ area). Each boulder rolls to hit as a frost giant, doing 2-20 hp damage if successful.

Underneath the anvil is a small leather pouch with two 1,000-gp diamonds, and a large iron box containing four potions: a *philter of stammering and stuttering,* a potion of *extra-healing,* a potion of *sweet water,* and a potion of *fire resistance.* The box is locked and trapped with a double-blade that does 2-16 hp damage (no saving throw) to a bumbling thief.

There are no other treasures or traps in the room, except for giant-size smithy implements suitable for forging cold iron.

14. Long Kennels. This was the place where the normal winter wolves were kept. On the floor are six 20′-long lengths of sturdy chain, with collars and padlocks like those in area 16 (but smaller). The collars are labelled (in frost giant) "Fenris," "Skoll," "Garm," "Hati," "Gere," and "Freke." These chains can be most useful in raising the lid of the tomb (see area 21). Near the entrance of the tunnel is a pair of frozen, padded-leather gauntlets, torn and ripped, and a frayed, giant-size whip. There is nothing else of interest in here except the many bones of long-finished meals.

15. Hole in the Floor. This hole is all that's left of the only restroom in the keep. The 100′-long shaft leads to a large round chamber where the giants kept a (now very hungry) white pudding. It has been waiting over 500 years for a meal, but has become dormant (although it will wake up if food appears). Next to the hole is a small iron cage with the remains of 10 snowshoe hares.

White pudding: AC 8; MV 9; HD 9; hp 18; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 7-28; SD immune to acid, cold, and poison; lightning and blows from weapons split it in half; ML special; AL N; MC.

16. Great Feast Hall.

When you part the curtain made of small iron chain links, you enter what appears to be a huge feasting hall. Two stone tables 8′ high run along the east and west walls. Behind each of them is a long stone bench 4′ high. Another long table dominates the southern wall, but instead of a bench, a large stone throne sits behind it. All three tables face a large natural pit filled with the burning blue flames in the center of the room. White and blue smoke

Adult Personal Effects Table (Roll 1d20)

1	one cheap animal fur (value 1-10 gp)
2	copper bracelet, brooch, necklace, ring, buckle, or headband (value 1-6 sp)
3	piece of thick rope
4	piece of flint or steel
5	boulder
6	broad leather belt
7	large stone or metal food bowl
8	bone comb
9	piece of leather thong
10	cheap fur pillow
11	humanoid (arctic) scalp
12	set of small stone bowls with dried paint and hair brushes
13	crude painting on wall (depicting family life)
14	small iron box with 1-4 gems (value 10-40 gp each)
15	crude checkerlike board game
16	small metal bowl (used as a torch for burning ice)
17	stone needle and thread spool
18	spare leather or iron codpiece
19	spare soft leather or fur boots
20	fur tunic (value 1-10 gp)

Child Personal Effects Table (Roll 1d6)

1	humanoid skull
2	small round stones (marbles) of various colors
3	small shiny stones (with numbers painted on them)
4	stuffed arctic animal
5	small boulders
6	human-size bone club or stone axe

pours out of the pit, covering the floor with a heavy fog. An archway in the center of the western wall leads into darkness. Attached to the northeastern and northwestern corners of the room are heavy chains with spiked collars. Two large vats fill the gaps between the three tables. The chamber is lit only by the blue fire and is dead quiet.

Fortunately for the party (and the yeti in area 17), the spiders in area 7 will not pass beyond the iron curtain. These spiders are afraid of passing through such things, much like sharks will not pass through curtains of air bubbles underwater. Any noise made by the PCs (such as talking out loud or boldly stepping through the curtain) alerts the yeti in the room to the west. The yeti then sneak into the feast hall or wait in ambush, at the DM's discretion.

The large central pit is the original blue ice deposit that gave the frost giants reason to build their keep here. The pits in area 8 have been channeled from below through deep underground tunnels. If a PC is immune to the cold flames, he can dig or swim through the tunnels in order to travel from room to room (this is a slow means of travel at best, since the substance is more ice than liquid).

Lying dormant in the central pit is the sole surviving member of Mok-Turoknin's entourage—his pet remorhaz, Icefang. This monster was raised from an egg by the giant king. Mok-Turoknin fed it often with his prisoners (kept in area 12 until they were needed), and everybody enjoyed watching Icefang's mealtimes.

Icefang (remorhaz): AC overall 0, head 2, underbelly 4; MV 12; HD 9; hp 72; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 4-24; SA swallow whole, heat lash; SD melt metal; ML 13; AL N; MC.

The remorhaz got to be quite big before his master was killed, so none of the giants felt safe in bringing him along. After the giants' departure, the young remorhaz searched the keep high and low for food and treasure but could find little of either, so he went to sleep. In the ice, his dormancy was complete, so he has neither grown nor aged.

The yeti (area 17) entered quietly enough so that Icefang was not awakened. However, should the party and the yeti battle in here, there is a 20% chance per round (cumulative) that Icefang will wake up in the hopes of catching a long-overdue meal. Icefang is not particular about what he eats, so you should roll randomly if necessary to see whether a party member or a yeti is closest to the pit. In any case, Icefang attacks both the winners and the losers, dragging victims into his pit for cold storage (this should be an impressive and frightening sight to all those present). He will also hunt down fleeing PCs and yeti after he snacks for 1-4 turns.

Icefang's treasure is at the bottom of the 15'-deep icy pit. Some of it came from Mok-Turoknin as gifts, while the rest was scavenged from around the open areas of the keep (Icefang is unable to open doors, although he might be able to bang them open with his head if he tries hard enough; or he could melt them, if he thinks of this). The hoard includes a silver collar studded with emeralds (worth 800 gp) that the remorhaz wears around his neck (the name "Icefang" is engraved in frost giant runes on the outside), six gems worth 200-800 gp each, an ornate golden *ring of sustenance* (Icefang is too stupid to try to wear it) apparently worth 100 gp, and a collection of 30 iron, giant-size tankards and plates (not valuable but fun to play with—if you're a remorhaz).

The two chains with collars in the corners of the room once held two huge winter wolves (the king's personal hunting dogs, now found in area 24). The 40'-long chains are very sturdy but can be pulled free from the walls if successful bend bars/lift gates rolls are made. Each collar is connected to its chain with a large iron padlock (normal chances to pick or knock open). Piles of bones still litter the areas around the chains. See area 21 for more on the usefulness of the padlocks and chains from areas 14 and 16.

The two huge vats once held mead that has slowly evaporated over the years. Icefang tasted some of the beverage, but the alcohol made him sick.

The throne has an iron mount in the left arm where Mok-Turoknin's great drinking horn was kept. A hook over the throne used to hold the white dragon's head that is now in area 24. A secret door behind the sliding throne (total 21 strength points to move) leads into a long tunnel that eventually exits behind the bed in area 21. There are no traps inside the secret tunnel.

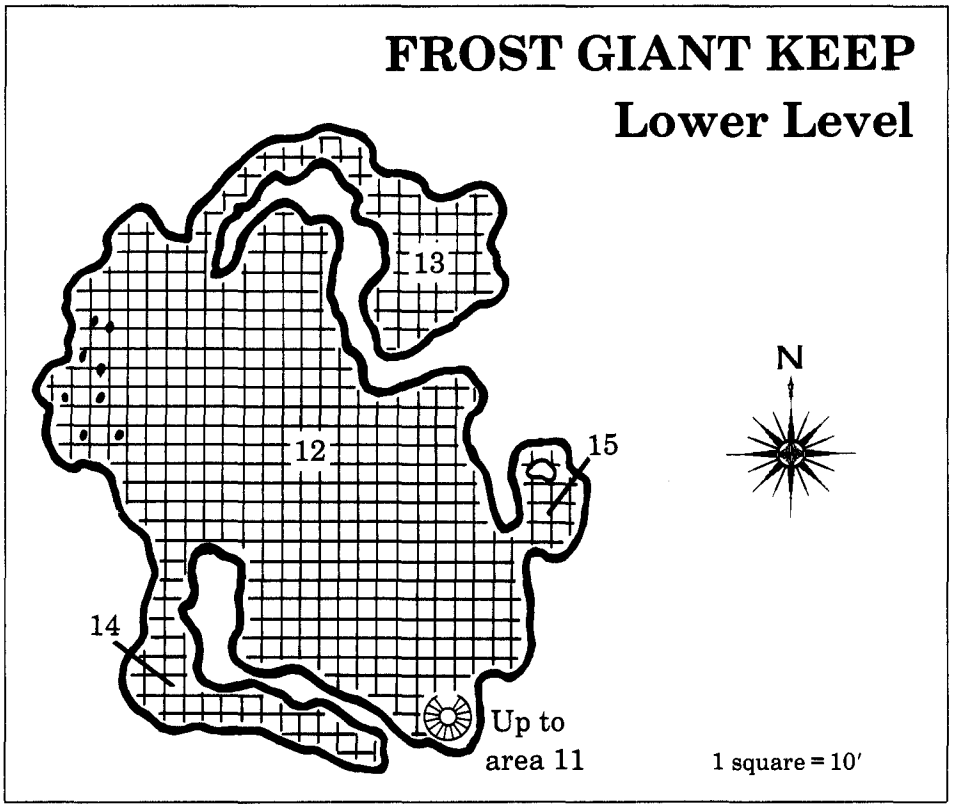
There is no more treasure within this room, as Icefang scooped it all up a long time ago. The archway to the west leads into area 17.

17. Kitchen and Larder. The kitchen area was entirely cleaned out by the departing giants. Even though frost giants don't cook their food, they often prepared it with their knives and added food colorings and spices.

The larder was closed until a few days ago when 10 yeti arrived at the keep. A few hunks of meat and bags of grain remained for them to chomp on. Most of the hunks of meat are the mangled bodies of tribesmen killed long ago. The yeti are enjoying the grisly remains when the party enters.

Yeti (10): AC 6; MV 15; HD 4+4; hp 36, 26 (×9); THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1-6/1-6; SA fright, squeeze; SD immune to normal cold; ML 13; AL N; MC.

If the PCs have been quiet and have entered this area before seriously exploring the feast hall, they have normal chances for surprising the beasts. The yeti will fight to the death to defend



their meager prizes and get some warm human flesh as well. They will not, however, leave areas 16 and 17 to face the spiders in area 7 (from whom they fled earlier). If the adventurers have not dealt with the spiders, they could become trapped between the two forces, and possibly Icefang as well.

Within the keep, the yeti retain their frightening stare but not their camouflage ability. The yeti's treasure is 11 miles away from the keep, except for a 400-gp silver necklace around the neck of their leader (the one with the most hit points).

There is nothing of value in this room except for a large iron meat hook sticking out of one hunk of meat. The hook has a small ring at one end (so that it could be hung on a nail in the kitchen) and will be useful when the party attempts to enter the tomb (see area 21). Note that Icefang might be temporarily appeased if it is offered any of the meat or yeti bodies.

18. Lieutenants' Quarters. Each of these rooms is a larger version of the normal giant living quarters (area 10). There is one large set of bed furs and a large iron chest in each room. In the room marked with an X, the chest has been emptied completely and the door left open. This is the room of the last surviving lieutenant, and he removed all of his valuables before leaving. The chests in the other rooms are locked but not trapped and contain six items each from the Adult Personal Effects Table on page 66. All jewelry found is silver or gold (worth 20-50 gp per piece), and each gem is worth twice as much as indicated on the table.

19. Guardian Chamber.

> This room is some kind of antechamber. Tapestries and furs line the walls, and two stone statues of scantily clad female giants apparently guard the archway ahead. The female giant statues are 20′ tall, and each holds a club.

The two stone statues are a large form of caryatid column. The two women shrink to human size and attack all intruders who fail to say "Hi, beautiful!" (in the frost giant language, of course). They have no treasure, but the eight tapestries and furs in the chamber are worth 100-400 gp each to a collector of giant artifacts. The archway leads into areas 20 and 21.

Caryatid columns (2): AC 5; MV 6; HD 5; hp 22 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SD breaks weapons; AL N; FF/18.

20. Concubine Chamber. The north section of Mok-Turoknin's abandoned private chambers was occupied by his royal concubines. These frost giants didn't believe in monogamous relationships, and Mok-Turoknin never chose a queen, although he had numerous heirs. Some of the frost giants formed temporary ties and raised families (as seen in area 10), but usually only on the basis of strength and privilege rather than mutual affection or love.

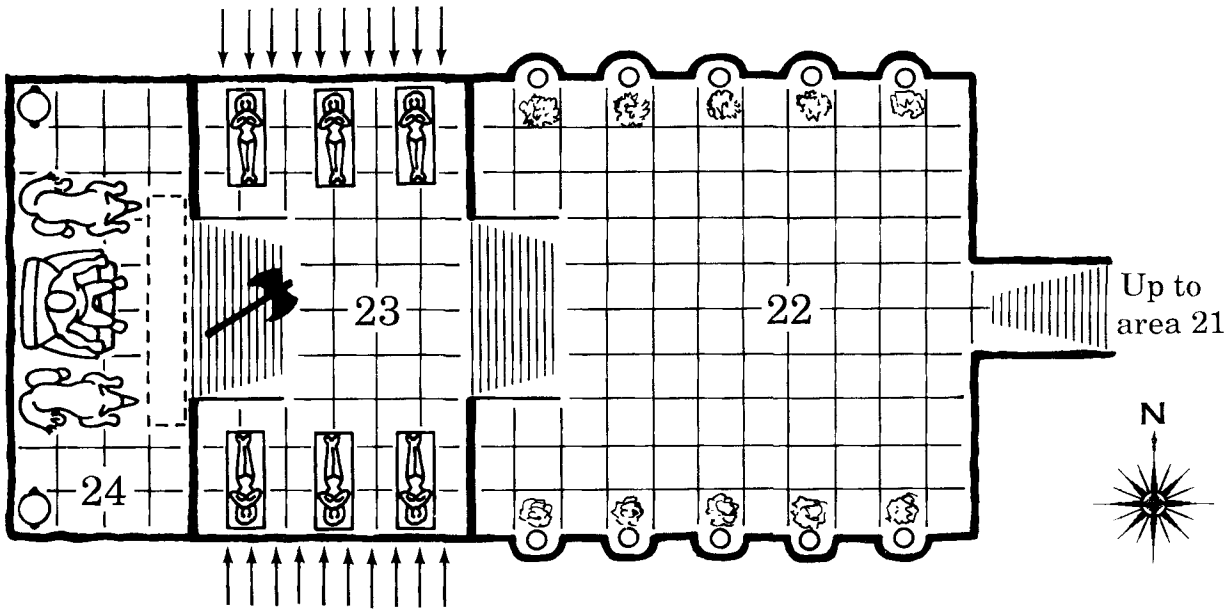
This room is completely empty, since the concubines and their treasures were buried along with the dead giant king. The tapestries and pillows that once decorated this side of the chamber can now be found lining the walls and floor of Mok-Turoknin's tomb (area 23).

21. Mok-Turoknin's Bedchamber. This room is the southern half of Mok-Turoknin's private quarters. It contains only a large iron bowl in the floor (formerly used to hold burning ice for light), a map of the region around Battle Axe Pass, and the giant king's huge bed. The rest of the treasures have been taken below to area 24. A secret door in the west wall behind the bed leads to a corridor that connects to area 16.

After finding this secret door, the party may believe that it is the only thing of interest in the room. However, the entrance to Mok-Turoknin's tomb is beneath the bed and can be opened in only one way. The stone slab upon which the bed rests cannot be lifted by normal physical means, nor will it slide along the floor. *Knock* spells will not work because of enchantments placed on the tomb.

If the PCs search the bed and the ceiling carefully, they find an iron ring in each. The large ring (3′ in diameter) in the ceiling is positioned directly over the western end of the bed and is easily visible with good lighting. The ring in the bed is located in the eastern end of the slab and is hidden behind a small secret stone door (detected normally). Both rings are anchored strongly and cannot be pulled free.

THE TOMB OF MOK-TUROKNIN



One way of opening the doorway to the tomb is to take very heavy chains from areas 14 and 16 and connect them with the padlocks found in these same areas to form a chain at least 120' long. The padlocks must be picked open and then relocked; broken padlocks are useless. This super-chain must be threaded through the ceiling ring and hooked (with the meat hook from area 17) to the ring in the bed slab. Then two or more PCs with a total strength of 40 or better (or one PC with a strength of 22 or better) can pull on the chain, gaining enough leverage to raise the massive bed slab into a vertical position. All of these pieces must be of giant manufacture, since human chains, grappling hooks, and padlocks are much too light and flimsy to hold up under such weights. The dog collars are much too weak to help in this endeavor.

The slab is hinged underneath its western end (invisible from above). Once the slab is partially opened, another large hook becomes visible at the top of a large flight of stairs going down. The party can attach the free end of the chain to this hook in order to hold the slab in place.

The original length of chain, with its hooked and ringed ends, was taken away by the frost giants after they sealed up Mok-Turoknin below. It was formerly stored in a secret compartment (now empty) underneath the big iron bowl in the southeast corner of the bedroom.

Once the PCs open the doorway, read the following aloud:

> As the great slab is lifted, the loud hissing of released gas can be heard. A stone hinge is now visible beneath the western edge of the bed, and an iron hook is mounted just beneath the eastern lip of the floor. Descending into darkness is a large stone staircase some 20' wide. A chilling, musty smell rises upward as the dull hissing begins to die away.

The now-raised bed can be held in place with the hook in the top stair. The stairs lead down to area 22. The escaping gas is harmless, but the tomb is not.

The Tomb of Mok-Turoknin

> The secret flight of stairs continues down into the very heart of the mountain. There is no lighting here, and the air is even colder than in the rest of the keep.
>
> After you descend about 50', one stone step gives way slightly beneath you, and you hear the sound of grinding stone. Fearing a trap, you are relieved to see a pair of small blue flames growing far ahead of you. As the flames build, so does the light, and a grisly but magnificent sight now lies before you.
>
> The lights come from high on the rear wall of this massive, three-level chamber. The rear, upper level is dominated by a magnificent throne upon which sits a huge humanoid form. You can make out little else from this distance.
>
> A stairway leads down from the upper level to a middle level dominated by six slabs of stone. You can make out the form of a giant fur-covered body on each slab. The light from the rear of the chamber is dim,

but you can see another flight of stairs leading down from the middle level to the floor on which you stand.

22. Prisoners of Mok-Turoknin.

The sounds of rattling chains and groans to the left and right draw your attention to the walls on either side of you. Out of the darkness, 10 man-size forms come toward you. In the dim light you see the hollow features of long-dead tribesmen whose dying agonies are still etched in their frozen features.

Barbarian skeletons (10): AC 4; MV 12; HD 2; hp 16 each; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +4; SA extra strong for +2/+4; SD half damage from sharp or edged weapons, immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and cold-based spells, turned as ghasts, holy water has no effect; ML special; AL N; MC.

These men, some of the greatest warriors of the old world, were prisoners of the frost giants and were chained to the tomb walls in order to suffer the most horrible fate possible: death without honorable combat. They were buried alive with their souls bound here in disgrace until the time when they could defeat a foe or "die" trying.

Since there is little decay down here, these undead still wear the trappings and flesh of their former lives. However, since most of them starved or suffocated to death, and because of the freezing temperature in the tomb, they are thin and their flesh resembles mummified tissue. Also, the shackles that once bound their wrists are no longer tight enough to keep their shrunken hands from passing through.

As soon as the PCs enter this area, the warriors grab weapons from the piles that were laid at their feet upon their entombment. Most of these items are their own previous possessions, but the sword Thorgrim has also been deposited here with the bodies of those who wielded it against the giants.

Roll randomly to see which skeletal warrior wields Thorgrim, making sure not to alert party members to the ruse. There are four broad swords, two bastard swords (including Thorgrim), two spears, a flail, and a battle axe. Since the warriors are self-animated like revenants, not under the control of any cleric, and not inherently evil, they are more powerful and more difficult to turn than normal skeletons. Also, *fireballs* and other mass-destruction spells should be watched closely for area of effect and possible damage to the treasures within the tomb. The undead must be defeated one way or another to proceed onward. There is no other treasure here.

Thorgrim, or "Thor's Fury," is a *bastard sword +2, giant slayer.* It has an intelligence of 12, an ego of 11, and communicates through semi-empathy. Thorgrim acts like a *cursed berserking sword* in combat with any true giants (except for good-aligned ones). This berserking ends only when the giants are dead. The sword will not reveal its berserking power until that is needed, so its wielder might be in for a nasty turn the first time he meets up with giants. A character wielding Thorgrim cannot avoid the berserk rage, but if given space ahead of time, the rest of the party can avoid being hacked to pieces along with the giants.

The chamber is plain, as are the walls. There are five human-size sets of chains set into semicircular alcoves along each wall. Just in front of each alcove is a pile of miscellaneous furs and weapons. Most have been frozen solid for over five centuries and are perfectly preserved but not very valuable. In one pile, however, is a set of keys to the storerooms (area 6). A flight of stairs leads up to area 23 and is not trapped.

23. Concubines of Mok-Turoknin.

Ascending the first flight of stairs carefully, you can see that there are indeed six blocks of stone with bodies on them. Along the floor are piles of furs and pillows, and the walls are lined with tapestries and more furs. Each body appears to be a perfectly preserved female frost giant, peacefully resting on a bed of luxurious fur and decorated in sparkling, rich jewelry. At the foot of each bed of stone is a large iron chest. A set of stone stairs leads up to the throne level. At the bottom of the stairs is a gigantic double-bladed axe that has apparently fallen from somewhere above. It is jet black and covered in frost giant runes. The huge weapon rests in a dark pool of liquid, and the scent of blood is in the air.

This is the final resting place for the concubines of the giant king, who were buried, per frost giant custom, with the king upon his death. They were put to sleep with poison, and the contented looks upon their frozen features indicate a complete lack of suffering. Each has been buried with her personal belongings, no matter how valuable. From 2-5 pieces of jewelry (worth 200-500 gp each) adorn each giantess.

The iron chests are unlocked and untrapped and contain very fine quality versions of the personal belongings described in area 10 (about 50-gp worth of items per giantess). Also in this room are 10 giant furs of various animals worth 150 gp each, six large silk throw pillows worth 200 gp each, and eight beautiful tapestries worth 250 gp a piece.

Behind the tapestries, along the north and south walls, are a series of holes (10 per side). Inside each is a spear trap, set off by stepping on the western stairs (see below). If the trap is set off before the tapestries are removed, their value will be reduced to 10% of normal from the damage done by the spears. The giantesses are very dead and will not attack the party.

The 10'-long weapon at the foot of the stairs is known in the legends as Gore, Mok-Turoknin's fabled axe. This axe bleeds from both blades just before, during, and after it kills, and is decorated in blood-red runes. It is magical but not intelligent, being a huge *axe of wounding +1.*

Gore fell from its master's grasp during a recent earthquake. This incident fit the conditions of Mok-Turoknin's *curse* (i.e., his remains were disturbed), and caused all the events that followed. It is unlikely that any PC will be capable of wielding Gore, so the only logical thing for the party to do is replace it in the giant king's grip (see area 24).

The pool is cooling human blood. The stairs lead up to area 24. The first person who steps on these stairs sets off 20 giant-size spear traps set into the north and south walls. Each spear fires horizontally across the room and hits as a frost giant, doing 2-12 hp damage. The spear attacks should be distributed among all those on this level, with no more than three spears per character. There is nothing else of value in the room.

24. The Throne of Mok-Turoknin.

Seated atop a cold stone throne is the frozen, hideous form of the frost giant king, Mok-Turoknin. Although his helm-covered skull is split down the middle, he wears a wry smile across his blue and twisted lips. His left hand is empty, but a large white horn is nearby, held in a pair of iron brackets like a drinking cup waiting for the next draught of mead. His right hand hangs oddly over the edge of the right arm of the throne, frozen solid and holding only cold air. To each side of the throne is a huge white winter wolf, frozen in place, eternally guarding his master. Above the giant is a large white dragon's head with a shimmering silver chain dangling from its chin. Along the walls are rune-covered frescoes that depict the giant king. Two huge iron chests inlaid with gold tracery rest in the rear corners of the room beneath two iron braziers filled with burning ice. The flickering blue light adds a ghostly life to the eerie scene.

The giant king is dead, although his spirit is not far away. The *curse* extends only to Mok-Turoknin's person, so the PCs may remove all treasures and items within the tomb except for the axe, his personal jewelry (a necklace worth 3,000 gp), armor, etc. Anyone who defiles the corpse will be subject to nightmares, then death in one month's time (no saving throw) unless the stolen goods and body are returned to their original state.

The *curse* can be removed only with a *wish* or *alter reality* spell or similar magic. *Remove curse* or *dispel magic* spells, etc., will not work. Since the party is unlikely to possess such powerful magic, the only way to halt the *curse* is to return the axe Gore to its original position.

The axe should be placed vertically in Mok-Turoknin's right hand, with the blade touching the floor and the handle resting squarely in his right palm. If examined closely, the palm shows a round indentation frozen into it, while a slight bloody scratch can be located along the floor where the blade used to rest. If the axe is restored to the giant king's grip, Mok-Turoknin's face shifts to a frown, and his ghost returns to the outer planes.

If the party does invoke the wrath of the giant king, the apparition of Mok-Turoknin appears. The apparition swings its blade instead of choking its victims, but the effect is the same. Unless the adventurers possess a great deal of magical or silvered weapons and are very powerful, they have little chance of escaping Mok-Turoknin's wrath.

Mok-Turoknin's apparition: AC 0; MV 24; HD 16; hp 121; THAC0 n/a; #AT 1; Dmg special; SA senses victims by *ESP* within 100', kills by suggestion; SD hit only by magical weapons; ML 20; AL CE; FF/12. A victim slain by this apparition cannot be *resurrected* and will not arise as a normal-strength apparition.

Normal apparitions are very hard to turn (see the FIEND FOLIO tome, page 12), but Mok-Turoknin's apparition is even stronger. The giant king's ghost is turned as a 16-HD undead monster, or special. The PCs won't be able to turn him for many, many levels yet.

Anyone who removes the white horn from the throne's brackets without placing something of equal weight (approximately 25 lbs.) immediately in its place sets off a 50'-long pit trap located directly in front of the throne. The pit drops 40' to rusty iron spikes that do an additional 4-24 hp damage. A saving throw vs. poison is required to avoid tetanus (see the 1st Edition *DMG,* page 14; treat as an acute, severe/terminal muscular disease).

The drinking horn is an ancient white dragon's horn, hollowed out, polished perfectly smooth, and encrusted with jewels. The horn is not magical but is quite beautiful and worth about 2,000 gp. This horn came from the white dragon whose head is mounted above the throne. A replacement horn, carved of wood, has been attached to the white dragon's head above the throne, to keep things symmetrical.

If the small silver chain hanging from the bottom of the dragon's head is pulled down, the mouth of the dragon opens and fine quality mead pours into the space where the horn is supposed to be. If the horn has not been removed, just enough mead pours out to fill the vessel. If the horn is no longer in place, the mead pours all over the frozen dog on the left side of Mok-Turoknin. The dragon's head is magical and can be removed by lifting it off its hook.

The dogs are huge winter wolves, twice the size of regular ones. They are truly dead and cannot attack. They hunt with their master in Jotunheim now.

The frescoes along the walls are similar to those found in area 7. The battle in which Mok-Turoknin slew the white dragon is detailed, and one of the white dragon's horns is shown being made into a large drinking vessel (which the king is seen using often in other frescoes). Numerous battles with the human tribesmen are also recorded, all suspiciously ending in the giants' favor.

The two chests are both locked and trapped. If either trap is set off, the sconce above dumps burning ice onto anyone within 10' of the chest. This inflicts 4-24 hp damage (save for half damage) to the PC(s), and each combustible and magical item must make its own saving throw if the PC fails the first save. Inside each chest are 2,500 gp and 4,000 sp.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs return to Drinidok and Ian's dreams have ended, there will be a great celebration for the heroes. The recovery of the sword Thorgrim will stamp the approval of the gods upon the PCs, and songs will be sung of their great deeds (the highest honor that can be paid). Ian will declare them blood brothers (or sisters), and perform the appropriate rituals that night during the feasting.

By the time the PCs return to the village, the pass will have cleared and they can return to Dagmalstad, where all accounts can be settled. The PCs should have an uneventful trip back to the city, where sunshine, warm sea breezes, and laughing children will prove that they've returned from the land of the dead at last.

Further Adventures

There are a number of variations made possible by the nature of the encounters in this adventure. You could provide a higher-level party with a challenge by using the keep intact and filled with giants. Enough information has been provided about defenses and occupants to make this a viable alternative.

Another thing you can do to add a more fantastic element is to arrange a time travel gate in Battle Axe Pass. The winds and low visibility could slowly carry the party back in time to the days just following Mok-Turoknin's death. The party must then face the remaining giants and keep Mok-Turoknin from being laid to rest (eliminating the *curse* altogether). Such a party should be of 5th-7th level to handle the remaining giants and their pets.

If you wish to put a final dramatic cap onto the adventure, arrange for another earthquake to rock the area as the party leaves. The keep is completely destroyed, burying the giant king forever. Fortunately, this time the earthquake fails to activate the *curse* of Mok-Turoknin. Ω

(continued from page 52)

There is also a small amount of magical treasure among the jumbled mass on the floor. All of the magical items were taken from victims of the manscorpions and were not part of the airship's cargo. By sorting through the clutter, the PCs may find a *ring of plant control;* a *ring of protection +2;* an ivory and silver scroll tube, worth 50 gp, containing a scroll of *protection from lycanthropes;* and a large silver flask, worth 25 gp, containing a potion of *clairvoyance.*

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs defeat the manscorpions and sack the temple, their only real problem will be transporting the treasure through the Broken Lands. The DM can use the mass combat ("War Machine") rules from the Companion Set for large battles between the PCs and hordes of orcs intent upon separating the adventurers from their hard-won treasure.

If the PCs are unable to defeat the manscorpions but are able to escape, the manscorpions pursue the party for a maximum of 10 miles from the temple. The manscorpions will go no farther because they fear that the intruders may be only a diversion to lure out the temple's defenders while another party waits to sack the place.

If they escape, the PCs may hire mercenaries or men-at-arms in a second attempt to take the Temple of Skorpios. The DM may wish to use this second attempt as an opportunity to use the "War Machine" rules. While the PCs gather mercenaries, the manscorpions also gather their strength. Thus, when the PCs return, a great battle can be fought in the narrow ravine.

The PCs may not wish to bother resmelting and refining the treasure and may simply sell it in its present form. They should be reminded that anyone buying the chunks of gold and silver will want to make a profit on the deal and will not pay full price. The PCs will receive between 50% to 75% of the stated values. In the role of a buyer of the treasure, the DM should drive a very hard bargain. The buyer doesn't really know how much of the treasure is solid silver or gold and how much might be a thin layer of metal melted around a large piece of worthless rock.

However, no matter how the PCs gain the treasure, whether by themselves or at the head of an army of mercenaries, they will win renown. The tale of the lost airship and its fabulous treasure lost nothing in the telling over the years. Those in the adventuring party who find the wreck will be nicknamed "the *Pride* Finders" and will be treated with honor and respect by both ordinary citizens and hard-bitten treasure hunters alike. However, if manscorpions elsewhere ever find out that the PCs looted one of their most valued temples, the PCs' troubles have only begun. Ω

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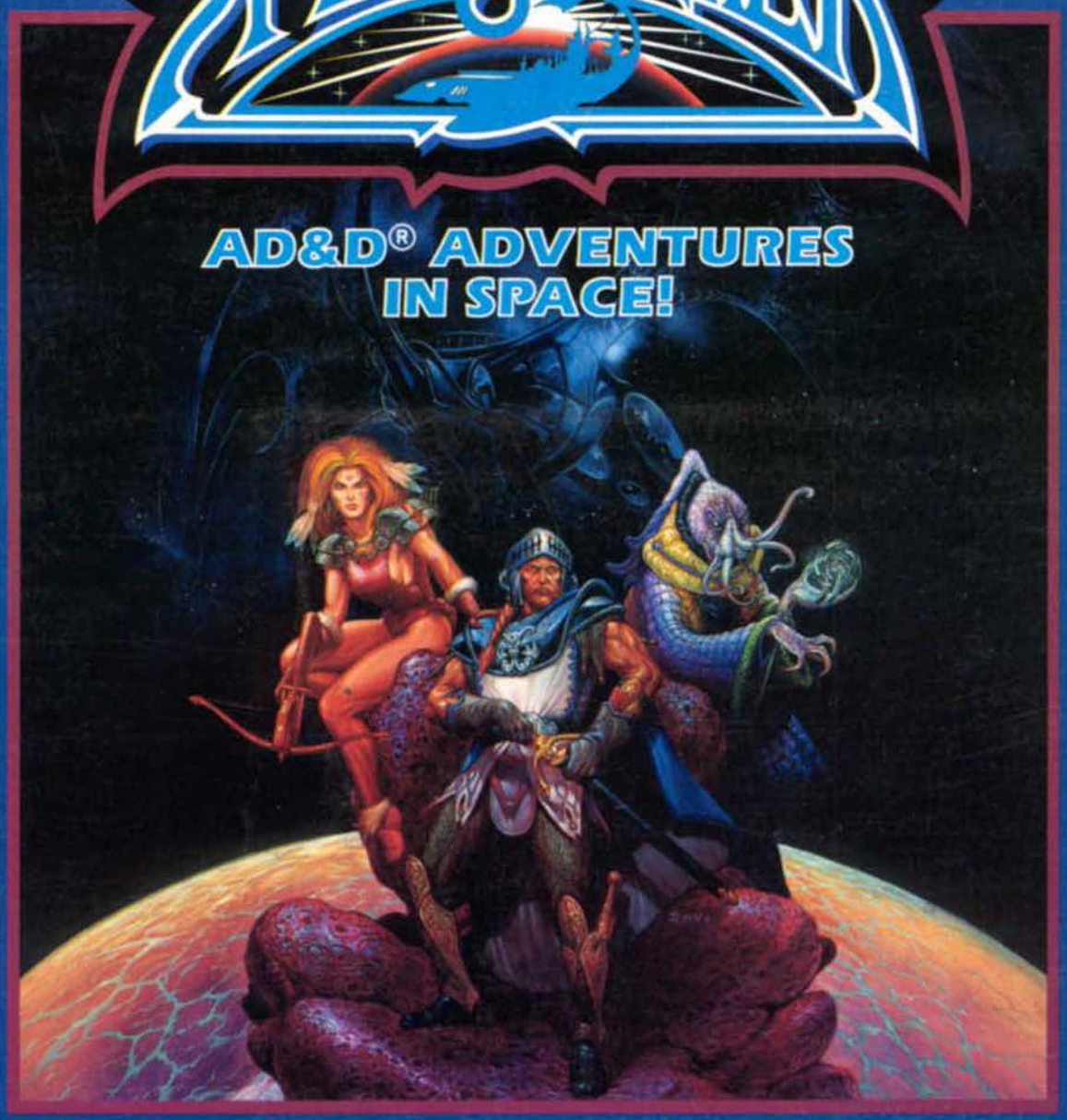

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